

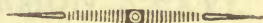




A
DEFENCE
OF THE
ANCIENT FAITH,
IN FOUR VOLUMES;
OR
A FULL EXPOSITION
OF
The Christian Religion.
IN A SERIES OF
CONTROVERSIAL SERMONS.

BY THE REV. PETER GANDOLPHY,
Priest of the Catholic Church.

VOL. III.



LONDON:

Printed and published for the Author,
By KEATING, BROWN and KEATING, 38, Duke-street, Grosvenor-
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GILLOW, Liverpool; and FITZPATRICK, Dublin.

1815.

[Entered at Stationers Hall.]

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CONTENTS.

	PAGE
SERMON XXXI.	
On the Sacraments in general .	1
SERMON XXXII.	
On the Sacrament of Baptism .	29
SERMON XXXIII.	
On the Sacrament of Confirmation .	61
SERMON XXXIV.	
On the Sacrament of the Eucharist, or the Lord's Supper . .	87
SERMON XXXV.	
On Transubstantiation in the Sacra- ment of the Eucharist . .	118
SERMON XXXVI.	
On the Protestant Explanation of the Sacrament of the Eucharist .	149
SERMON XXXVII.	
On the Eucharistic Sacrifice of the new Law in the Lord's Supper, commonly called the Mass .	203

CONTENTS.

SERMON XXXVIII.

- On the ancient Types and Figures of
the Eucharistic Sacrifice of the
new Law in the Lord's Supper,
commonly called the Mass . . . 203

SERMON XXXIX.

- On the essential Part of the Sacrifice
of the Mass . . . 231

SERMON XL.

- On the Traditional Evidences of the
Sacrifice of the new Law in the
Lord's Supper . . . 263

SERMON XLI.

- On Communion under one Kind . . . 299

SERMON XLII.

- On the Adoration paid to the Holy
Eucharist . . . 335

SERMON XLIII.

- On the Necessity of a Remission of
Sins . . . 358

SERMON XLIV.

- On the Sacrament of Penance . . . 383

SERMON XLV.

- On the Objections to Sacramental
Confession . . . 420

SERMON XXXI.

ON THE SACRAMENTS IN GENERAL.

The just man lives by faith. (Rom. i. 17.)

IN controverting the grand question of religion with our Protestant fellow-subjects, when I observe individuals foiled and disconcerted on a leading and fundamental point, immediately throwing out a defiance on some other of minor importance, I must conclude that it is not for truth they are contending, but for victory;—not that error may be exposed, but that their own cause may seem to triumph. The remark which I feel obliged to make on this conduct is, that it usually demonstrates a bad cause, and betrays the bias of an insincere mind. Are we then to acknowledge ourselves confuted, they will reply, while yet we have objections to pro-

pose, and arguments to advance?—God forbid, my Brethren, that I should ever advise any one to act, but upon the principle of the fullest conviction. Religion is in its consequences too interesting ever to be hazarded on the flimsy ground of opinion or persuasion. But when the evidence of truth prevails against men on a point where they supposed their cause securest,—when they are forced to give way before an adversary, on the leading questions of Catholicity and Apostolicity, and yet after this, recur to quibbles about terms and expressions, ceremonies and language, or to a point of inferior consequence,—I must repeat, that they shew themselves reluctant to abandon the side of error.

An upright deportment for persons in these circumstances would be, to suspend their judgment, to mistrust their own conceptions, nay even to incline to the sentiments and decisions of their adversaries, who probably are not less firm on

subjects where they have not been tried, than on the ground where they have already outreasoned and defeated their opponents.

My Brethren, if there be any among you, who sincerely wish to find the pearl of revealed religion, I pledge the word of God, that you will discover it with the greatest facility. *Seek, he says, and you shall find, knock, and it shall be opened to you.* (Matt. vii. 7.) And on the other hand, should there be others to whom truth is unwelcome, and whose desire is not so much to improve in knowledge, as to hang a shade of delusion before their eyes,—I can assure them also, that their earnest endeavours will be crowned with success. *And this is the judgment, said Jesus Christ, for every one that doth evil hateth the light, and cometh not to the light, that his works may not be reprov'd.* (John iii. 19.)

My Friends, I have hitherto laboured to make you acquainted with the visible Church of Christ; I have conducted you

into that sanctuary of divine revelation, and taught you to respect her venerable authority. In this research we have been assisted by reason, experience, and the evidence of our senses ;—but, like the eglet, you must now become strong and fit for higher flights ;—with me ascend on the wings of faith, and enter the region of a spiritual life. My Brethren, my endeavour shall be to shew you how *the just man is to live by faith* ;—how the Christian, sanctified by grace, is to be esteemed worthy of the highest honours in a future state of existence. I shall, with this design, call your attention in this discourse to the Sacraments of the Church ;—and whilst I here present them to you in one view, as the essence and substance of the Christian worship, I propose to discuss them individually, in a more close and particular manner hereafter.

Having therefore already laid down the attested revelations of God, as the foundation of faith,—and exhibited the living

and traditional authority of the Catholic Church, as the channel which is to convey it through all generations;—having moreover shewn the nature of this revealed faith, to be *the substance of things to be hoped for, the evidence of things which appear not*; (Heb. xi. 1.) and having presented it to you, as an object above human research, *the Gospel is made manifest for the obedience of faith*; (Rom. xvi. 26.) in quality of the delegated minister of the word of God, I now declare to you, that in the covenant of the Christian law, there are seven sacred rites, yielding grace to the soul.—These are called mysteries or Sacraments, because they form the very essence, substance and support of that holy and spiritual life, which is to characterize the disciples of Jesus Christ upon earth. They are to change our nether state of existence, and to exalt us to a supernatural rank:—they are to fit us for heaven, ere we reach the goal of immortality:—they are to communicate something hea-

venly to our nature, at the same time that we continue upon earth :—they are infinite to make us associates with angels whilst we converse with men. Before I proceed however, I shall lay it down as a principle, that since as men, we are a compound of spirit and matter, so it is fit, that these sacramental institutions should have an exterior and sensible form, as well as an interior and spiritual property ; and consequently are always to be viewed as compounds of both : that is, not as mere ritual ceremonies, but as the very essence of the revealed religion of Jesus Christ.

I am aware, that in proportion as I advance in this mysterious course, and lead you nearer to the objects of faith, the more difficult becomes the task of teaching you the practical points of revealed worship. For the more mystical and spiritual any object becomes, the more is it unnatural and new, and consequently imperative of strong faith. Yet in the degree that it is unnatural and new, I mean *supernatural*,

and imperative of strong faith, so does it assume the character of *revelation*.

This being the spiritual and sublime way then, through which I shall endeavour to conduct you, I wish to prepare you beforehand for the new objects to be presented to your faith, by observing, that as religion is supernatural, and spiritual in its end and object,—so it is proper that the means should also be supernatural and spiritual;—and that as men are designed for a state of supernatural bliss, so their religion should have some reference to, and connection with that order of things. Thus for instance the mystery of BAPTISMAL REGENERATION, which opens to us this new world, gives us for inheritance, besides a title to the glory of God's eternal kingdom, other endowments of sanctity and interior accomplishments of the soul, which render her even amiable and lovely in the eyes of her Creator. By this new birth, having ceased to be the slave of sin, she puts off her wretched defectiveness,—

assumes the vigour and rich beauty of a new existence, and already radiates the lustre of her future glory. However deep had been the stain of guilt, by this regenerating act, all is made fair and spotless; the most valuable graces of God are ready to flow into this precious vessel, and the treasures of heaven are unfolded for her acceptance.

Such is the spiritual birth of a Christian soul, operated by the sacrament of Baptism: which effected, God is instantly prepared again to seal his engagements, by the mystery of CONFIRMATION, a sacrament for the encrease of grace, by which she is specially armed for combat with her spiritual enemies, and prepared to resist their most determined assaults. She may, then, be said to be *overshadowed by the Holy Ghost*, whose delight hereafter shall ever be to impart to her his most privileged gifts;—to make her humble, chaste and faithful, and to consider her as a beloved spouse. He will make her the temple of his habitation,—

give her the spirit of wisdom and of understanding,—the spirit of counsel and of fortitude,—the spirit of doctrine and of piety. He will purify her affections from all base and earthly alloy, and stimulate her to seek earnestly the kingdom of God.

The Christian soul being thus *regenerated* and *confirmed* in divine grace, but destined, while yet on earth, to participate of still more extraordinary benedictions, the EUCHARISTIC TABLE is prepared for her spiritual nourishment and support. Here she feeds on the bread of angels, drinks of the cup of peace, is united with sanctity, and becomes replenished with the Divinity himself.—Here the *body* and *blood* of Jesus are given to her, as a pledge of her favour with God, and of her future glory in his celestial kingdom.—Here she really communicates with the angels, and becomes one with them in her Redeemer. This sacrament is instituted for her, as her *daily bread*, of which she is even commanded to partake, the Saviour himself declaring,

except you eat the flesh of the Son of Man, and drink his blood, you shall not have life in you. (John vi. 54.)

Being moreover a divine deposit to which we can always have access, it here exists under the elementary shadow, as the ark of alliance, the testament of redemption in the blood of an incarnate God, and the symbol of our future resurrection. And being also the unbloody host of expiation, the living victim of atonement, with which the soul has it always in her power to approach the throne of mercy and to interest the whole court of heaven,—it forms a tribute of homage which the Godhead cannot reject, and is an act of religion the most sacred and sublime in its nature, equal to any the elect themselves can render in the presence of the Deity. God is the priest, God the victim, and the majesty of God the object of worship.

Verily, my Friends, all this is transcendently spiritual and sublime,—and can you follow me? Can you thus rise with me on

the wings of faith and revelation? If you can, soon shall we distinguish the children of the covenant from the children of Adam; soon shall we know the Christian from the carnal man.—The one lives by nature, the other lives by grace;—the one is directed by human perceptions, the other is guided by divine faith. Thus, my Friends, we shall be able to discern you, and you to discern yourselves.—Know moreover, that it is thus the Holy Ghost himself will discern you; *I have given them thy word*, said Jesus Christ, *and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world; as I also am not of the world.* (John xvii. 14.)

Notwithstanding these extraordinary graces thus prepared for the Christian soul in this world, the bounty of God however is not yet exhausted; for should she sink by infidelity from her height of pre-eminence and favour,—should she yield herself a captive to her own passions, and become their dupe,—the recovery of grace is still

within her power, and the sacrament of PENANCE is able to loose her from sin, to dissipate the darkness of spiritual death, and restore her to pristine grace and vigor. In these healing waters of repentance, she finds a cure for all her spiritual disorders, a balm of consolation to assuage the acuteness of grief, an antidote for despair, and a pledge of final forgiveness. Through these waters of contrition, she returns like the prodigal child, into the presence of her Creator, who is ready to reward her repentance with new gifts, at the same time that he augments her confidence by the restitution of antecedent graces.—Here likewise, we not only behold a divine tribunal, or judicial court, but an asylum ever open to the penitent soul. For it is not once nor twice only, that she will gain admittance : thy mercies, oh ! God, are countless, and only terminate, on earth, with the last breath of human life.

Moreover, whilst the soul is struggling even at the verge of dissolution, new

graces are administered to the departing Christian, and the holy ANOINTING WITH OIL is a figure of their healing properties. As the body has then its physician, so has the soul, which has now the comfort of seeing her faith, her hope, and her charity in Jesus Christ, strengthened and confirmed by his divine assurance, *that if she be in sins, they shall be forgiven her.* (James v. 15.) What courage then, what resolution does she not derive from this sacrament of the Church in her agonizing moments, to enable her, with confidence, to pass into the presence of her Creator, and surrender into his fatherly hands that soul which he has already purified from the guilt of sin! In this manner, seeing that the grace of God attends her to her last breath, she peaceably reclines on the pillow of death, in the firm conviction of hereafter rising to a glorious immortality. Such is the spiritual birth, life and death of the Christian. *The just man lives by faith.* (Rom. i. 17.)

Having now enumerated five of these sacramental rites, there remain but two unnoticed : one instituted to raise men to the dignity of ministers of Jesus Christ, the other to sanctify the contract of marriage. As the sacraments are divine institutions, working a supernatural effect in the soul, so they can only be administered by those to whom God has delegated the spiritual prerogatives of Minister, to which it is the object of the sacrament of HOLY ORDERS to raise the individual, by conferring on him the priestly character, together with the necessary graces and powers for dispensing the mysteries of the church of God. Hence the apostle exclaims, *Let a man so account of us, as of the ministers of Christ, and the dispensers of the mysteries of God.* (1 Cor. iv. 1.) This sacred rite imparts an unchangeable character to the soul, perpetuates from generation to generation the apostolic order, and through the grace it communicates, exalts men to the high and sublime station of accredited

ministers and deputies of the eternal Son upon earth, making them his constituted authorities in religion, or the immediate vicegerents of the high-priest of the order Melchisedech; and forms them, under Jesus Christ, the secondary instruments of the salvation of souls. *Come after me,* said the Redeemer to Peter and Andrew, *and I will make you to be fishers of men.* (Matt. iv. 19.)

The seventh or remaining sacrament of the church, is that in which God sanctifies the state of MARRIAGE, by ratifying the alliance, and conferring particular graces on the parties. By St. Paul styled *a great sacrament in Christ and the Church*, (Eph. v. 32.) it enables them, under his benedictions, to rear and educate their families in sentiments of piety and religion,—to have ever before their eyes the fear of sin, rather than the love of the world,—and to seek perfection in the virtues of their state. It is to assist them patiently to bear with each other's failings, and to consider their

union, like to the indissoluble union of Jesus Christ with his church. In this manner rendering their society holy and spiritual, it diffuses grace throughout the community, and exalts human nature ; so that the whole life of man is spiritualized, and all his functions. *The just man lives by faith.* (Róm. i. 17.)

Religion has thus been directed by Jesus Christ, to act a very prominent part in every stage of the Christian's life. Receiving him from the mother's womb, she instantly regenerates him to the Redeemer,—she afterwards sanctifies him with the gifts of the Holy Ghost,—nourishes him with the bread of angels,—restores him to forfeited grace, and in society either unites him to virginal purity by an indissoluble bond,—or conducts him to the altar of Jesus Christ, as a priest of Melchisedech, clothed in perpetual chastity, and destined to offer the eternal victim ; whilst in the last moments of life, she hangs over his departing spirit, breath-

ing upon him the breath of *peace*, and when the soul has fled to the realms of bliss, she deposits his mortal remains within the silent earth, there to rest in undisturbed sleep, till they hear the awful trumpet sound, *Ye dead arise*. And thus *the just man* in his passage across the stage of this world only *lives by faith*. (Rom. i. 17.)

This, my Friends, is that spiritual life, to which I now wish to call your attention; this, that sublime and supernatural religion, which revelation has imparted to us;—this, the path we are all commanded to pursue;—this, the worship we are all to practise.—Hence St. Paul adverting to it, says, that *without faith it is impossible to please God*. (Heb. xi. 6.) I know that our adversaries will tell us, that the object of faith, to which the apostle alludes, is the incarnation of the Son of God. In reply then, I must observe, that scripture is always to be explained by the context;—and therefore when St. Paul, positively declares that there are divine *mysteries*, of

which he and others are the *dispensers* and *ministers*, and whereas mention is made of them in other parts of scripture, I will put it to the judgment of the sincere and candid Christian to say, if the words of St. Paul do exclusively refer to belief in the incarnation of the Son of God ; or not more properly to that spiritual life of faith, which I have just presented to your pious consideration. *The just man lives by faith.* (Rom. i. 17.)

My Brethren, in laying down this spiritual and sublime form of religion, as the proposed object of your faith, it will be but proper to subjoin, that (excepting Protestants) it is the universal religion of Christendom. Peculiar to no nation or century, but common to all, it is professed by the Greek, as well as by the Latin, and by the evidence of schismatics, proved to have been an apostolical tradition. It is what all the holy Fathers have made the subject of their writings and instructions, and stands established by the authority of

facts, as well as by the testimony of profane history.

But you ask, if the scripture also gives evidence of it? My Brethren, the scriptures not only take notice of the whole, but of every part, though not so distinctly perhaps as some might desire.—The scriptures, written with the assistance of God under the eye of the Church, were composed in that form, which best suited the circumstances of the times. The object of the inspired penmen being evidently, to establish the Incarnation of the Son of God and the consequent necessity of salvation through him,—as well as to lead nations to the practice of that heavenly and sublime morality which the new law of Christ unfolds, their moral doctrine was what all men could take as self-evidence of the truth, excellence, and divine character of the Christian religion. But, my Brethren, the great mysteries of faith being totally different, were very differently to be spoken of. We ourselves have

daily practical experience of this difference ; and while we find it easy to write on the moral law of Christ, almost tremble when we venture to reveal the mysteries in a dead letter, and thus commit them to the interpretation of individuals.

My Brethren, the apostles and evangelists acknowledged this difficulty ; and therefore in their writings, seem only to have noticed them, as things to be explained in another place ;—to which conduct they were guided by two very obvious reasons. First, that the minds and ideas of men might not be previously led into confusion and mistake, by hasty preconceptions, from which it is always most difficult to extricate them ; and secondly, that these mysteries might not become an object of blasphemous derision to the Jews and Pagans, whose continual effort was to hold up the Christian worship to contempt, and with that design, did often make it a subject of theatrical entertainment. Witness the man, who thus re-

ceived baptism upon the public stage, and professing himself a disciple of Christ, afterwards died a martyr.

But, my Brethren, in proof that this worship was originally and distinctly taught to men, with the written word, it constitutes, as I said, the universal religion of the Greeks, as well as of the Latins, with the exception of the small minority of Protestant reformists, who withdrew from Catholicity in the 16th century. Nor let it be said, that the Greek Christian adopted it from the Latin;—it is every where traced beyond all memorial tradition; and therefore according to the maxim of St. Augustin, because common to all places and all times, must necessarily have been received from the apostles.

The Protestants, in the commencement of their career, having had the assurance to tell the world, that the Greek Christians agreed with them in sentiment on the subject of the sacraments, and that only two or three were to be admitted as divine

institutes,—This declaration was considered such an outrage on the faith of the Eastern Churches,—such a scandalous calumny aimed at the religion of Jesus Christ, that the Greeks conceived themselves bound to vindicate their worship, which they most successfully did by particular as well as public acts*.

* Jeremy the Patriarch of Constantinople, in the answer which he sent, with the approbation of his Clergy, to the Protestant Divines at Wirtemberg, writes, “in the 7th chapter, you say—that you also acknowledge one holy Catholic Church, and that you administer, as you ought, the Sacraments, and the sacred ceremonies of the Church.—To that, we answer, that there is only one Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church of Christians, who rightly and conformably to what the holy Fathers have taught us by tradition, administer what has been ordained, settled by their canons, and confirmed by the Holy Ghost. The sacraments received in this Catholic Church of orthodox Christians, and the sacred ceremonies are seven in number; Baptism, the Unction of the divine Chrism, (that is Confirmation), the divine Communion, Ordination, Marriage, Penance, and the Holy Oil. As there are seven gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to Isaiah, so there are seven Sacraments of the Church, operated by the Holy Ghost. And there are but those and no more, as is seen by their division. For a sacrament either regards the generation of men,

My Brethren, in presenting this admirable and highly perfect form of worship, I

as Marriage according to Jesus Christ;—or their salvation, for instance the hierachial order of consecrated ministers, by whom, and in whom the sacraments are operated, some of which are useful to all, as Baptism, Confirmation and Communion, whilst others are designed for some in particular, as Ordination for Ecclesiastics, and Marriage for the laity; and in the same manner, Penance and the Unction of Holy Oil, for those who sin after baptism, which confer the remission of sins, and purify the soul from the stain she might have contracted. They are called Sacraments, because under sensible signs, they have a secret and spiritual effect. Each of these Sacraments is established by the holy Scripture; and the form and matter of them are determined, as also the efficient cause, or to speak more properly, the instrumental cause is likewise determined. For example, in Baptism, the matter is water, the form the words of the Priest; such a *servant of Christ is baptized in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost*; here, the instrumental cause is the Priest, though we do not reject baptism administered by a lay person, in cases of necessity."

This statement might be confirmed by many other great authorities, but I shall only advert to one more document which was sent by the Greeks to the French Court in 1672, and signed by the Patriarchs of Constantinople and Alexandria, and forty other Greek Bishops. In the first article they say; "We have seven holy and venerable Sacraments, which we have preserved through all anti-

am aware that our adversaries will object to it as too holy, too spiritual, and too sublime. But I conceive that its sanctity, its spirituality, and its sublimity, are the very qualities which should recommend it to *you*, and distinguish it, as the revealed religion of Jesus Christ. For, my Friends, if it be not divine revelation, name to me a cause which could induce all the nations of the earth to adopt it, as the essence of the Christian worship. It is too unlike natural religion, to allow us to believe that it could have originated in the minds of many, and too far spread, to suppose that one nation has taken it from another.

My Friends who are ever placing reason, nature and simplicity before your eyes, let me persuade you to join to them faith and revelation, and you will easily acknowledge the excellence of this sacramental worship. All things inform you, that you are born

quity, from the time that the holy gospel was first preached to us. These Sacraments are all venerable, and necessary for the salvation of the faithful." See *Perfec. de la Foi*, vol. v. pp. 19, 47,

with an hereditary fault and prone to evil, yet you hope that God will be favourable to your souls :—revealed religion then tells you that by baptism his grace is infused into you, and that he adopts you as his children, and co-heirs with Jesus Christ.—Experience convinces you that human nature is weak to resist the temptations of the flesh, the world and the devil :—revelation informs you, that in Confirmation God ratifies your election, and makes you more perfect in virtue.—Reason tells you that you must worship the God of heaven, and adore his incarnate Son Jesus Christ ; and that all that your poverty can lay before his eternal Majesty, is an humble and faithful heart :—religion teaches you, that the Son incarnate is still among you in the Eucharist, as a sensible object for your love and adoration ; and that you may daily present him to the eternal Father, as a most precious and holy oblation to appease the divine justice.—Reason tells you that if you have sinned, you must ac-

knowledge your guilt, repent, and implore the forgiveness of God :—revealed religion informs you that you shall have the comfort of knowing what repentance is required of you, that you may have hope in your contrition, and peace in divine absolution.—Nature tells you that your last hour is a terrible moment, and awful is the passage from time to eternity :—revelation brings comfort to your soul with the Sacrament of Extreme Unction for the remission of your sins.—Reason declares to you that man, without authority from God, cannot discharge a supernatural office and divine function :—revelation teaches you that by the divine Sacrament of Ordination, men are duly appointed and consecrated to that ministry.—Reason informs you that marriage is a natural and binding contract :—revealed religion teaches, that in Jesus Christ and in the Church it is indissoluble, conferring grace and other benedictions.—Thus, my Friends, this sacramental form of divine worship, seems that

very religion which is best suited to man's present state of existence, and which he may be supposed to have desired from the beginning. Since the goodness of God then, has provided a remedy for every exigency, I have only to exhort you, by living according to faith, to endeavour to render yourselves daily worthy of that reward, which shall one day crown your fidelity in the eternal kingdom of Jesus Christ, where grace shall bud forth and produce its full harvest.

I will now then terminate this discourse with a short address of the apostle to the Corinthians, which you may apply to yourselves. *We have received not the spirit of this world, but the spirit that is of God: that we may know the things that are given us from God.—Which things also we speak, not in the learned words of human wisdom; but in the doctrine of the Spirit, comparing spiritual things with spiritual. But the sensual man perceiveth not these things that are of the Spirit of God: for it is foolish-*

ness to him and he cannot understand : because it is spiritually examined. But the spiritual man judgeth all things. (1 Cor. ii. 12, 13, 14, 15.)



SERMON XXXII.

ON THE SACRAMENT OF BAPTISM.

Unless a man be born again of water and the Holy Ghost, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. (John iii. 5.)

MAN, originally created by God to be an inhabitant of the earth, was endowed with every ornament of body and mind;—no foul passion disturbed his serene soul,—happiness sweetened all his days, and angelic justice entitled him to be the cherished child of God; while equal bliss awaited all his posterity. But no sooner had he appeared thus perfect from his Maker's hand, than his Lord was desirous of receiving the tribute of his free will, and in order to prove the fidelity of this favoured creature, he declared to him, *Of the tree of knowledge of good and evil thou*

shalt not eat, for in what day soever thou shalt eat of it, thou shalt die the death. (Gen. ii. 17.)

My Friends, we here behold the Almighty threatening our first parent with that severe chastisement,—which in consequence of his prevarication, as in legal attain, has devolved upon the whole human race : *in sin did my mother conceive me*, said the Psalmist. (Ps. 56.) Death, the punishment decreed by God, comprehended all those miseries of body and mind to which fallen man has now become subject, and which in reality, are but the gradual process of final dissolution : for it may be said that no sooner does a man begin to live, than he begins to die. By this act then of original infidelity, we are now become objects displeasing and hateful in the sight of God, and our nature weakened, corrupted and deformed. The grosser and more sensual passions have assumed an ascendancy in proportion to the degraded state of the soul, and rational man is often the dupe

and the victim of his own vicious desires.

Such is the nature of original sin, or in other words, such are the defects with which our nature is propagated, and in which we are all born : and such the punishment of that original fault : *in that day thou shalt die the death.* (Gen. ii. 17.) All of which is still more fully confirmed by the Almighty himself: *to the woman also he said, I will multiply thy sorrows and thy conceptions ; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children, and thou shalt be under thy husband's power, and he shall have dominion over thee.—And to Adam he said ; Because thou hast hearkened to the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, whereof I commanded thee that thou shouldst not eat, cursed is the earth in thy work ; with labour and toil shalt thou eat thereof all the days of thy life. Thorns and thistles shall it bring forth to thee, and thou shalt eat the herbs of the earth ; in the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return to the earth, out of which thou wast taken ;*

for dust thou art, and unto dust thou shalt return. (Gen. iii. 16.)

Indeed, I am at a loss to conceive how any one can doubt the existence of *original* sin. My Friends, you may trace the cause in the very effect,—even in the instance of the infant that dies the day it is born. But you say, the question is, how far this original sin, can justly operate in excluding the whole human race from the kingdom of God's glory? And who has informed you, my friends, that it ever did? Who, that man was originally destined to enjoy that state of beatitude? Have you had a special revelation to that effect? No! It is Jesus Christ then only that has purchased for us that inheritance;—it is He that has exalted our nature to rank and dignity, by first assuming it himself;—with the Lamb only are we worthy to enter into the Holy of holies.—It is He that is the mighty conqueror of sin and death; He that has redeemed the honour of lost man by sealing us in his blood. *I saw them signed in their foreheads,* says St.

John; (Apoc. vii. 3.) and Jesus Christ himself declares, *that unless a man be born again of water and the Holy Ghost, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.* (John iii. 5.)

My Brethren, as it is on the sacramental mystery of regeneration in the new law, that I intend to address you this day, I shall not enter into any of those idle and curious questions, on which no man is competent to decide;—much harm has already ensued from theologians indulging in that species of vain and unprofitable learning. What is it to me, or to any one for instance, to what proportion of the human race, Jesus Christ, on the cross, was pleased specially to extend the merits of his sacrifice? Can we entertain suspicions of the justice of God? Faith teaches that he died for all, and that, on that day of mercy he offered a ransom for all the sins of the world. *The man Jesus Christ, writes the apostle, gave himself a redemption for all.* (1 Tim. ii. 6.)

Baptismal regeneration, my Brethren, is that sacred and mysterious ceremony, which Jesus Christ purposely instituted upon earth, for the sanctification of our souls ;—a ceremony which infuses divine faith, and restores us to original favour,—does away all actual guilt,—raises us to the dignity of adopted children of God, and makes us heirs to the glory of his eternal kingdom. A ceremony which is to fit us for the most extraordinary spiritual favours,—to mark us as the redeemed of Christ, and give the soul a character she will never lose in time or eternity.—A ceremony, by which we are introduced into the Christian Church, enrolled amongst its members, and entitled to all the privileges of the new dispensation. It expresses a special *sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ—a regeneration unto a lively hope—unto an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, and that cannot fade, reserved in heaven for you.* (1 Pet. i. 2, 3, 4.)

Our divine Saviour was therefore pleased

to call this ceremony a *new birth*, from the change it operates in the soul by grace, and hence it is often styled the sacrament of *regeneration*. *We are buried*, writes St. Paul, *together with him, by baptism unto death; that as Christ is risen from the dead by the glory of the Father, so we also may walk in newness of life.* (Rom. vi. 4.) *Wonder not*, said Jesus, *that you must be born again; that which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is Spirit; Amen, Amen I say—that unless a man be born again of water, and the Holy Ghost, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.* (John iii. 5.)—*Going therefore teach ye all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.* (Matt. xxiii. 19.)—*He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, he that believeth not shall be condemned.* (Mark xvi. 16.)

I shall therefore, my Brethren, in the first place, immediately speak to you of this ceremony, as an institution of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and se-

condly, shall advert to it, as a necessary and essential condition for salvation in the new law.

My Brethren, willing to grant that the sanctification of the soul is the work of the Almighty, we also allow that no change can be produced in her by any physical act, or application to the body. But because in our present state of existence, the soul is invisible to human eyes, and since we can only distinguish an interior operation through some external act or sensible movement of the body, it has pleased God, in the instances which he has chosen for conferring extraordinary graces, to institute some *sign*, or external ceremony, expressive of, and accompanying the grace with which he then invests the soul; both which together, in theological or scholastic language, are called a SACRAMENT. Now, my Brethren, you all know that the outward ceremony which is to accompany the interior grace of sanctification in baptism, is the application of

water to the body, with these words, *I baptize thee in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.* (Matt. xxviii. 19.) There is however nothing essential in the mode of applying this water (whether by aspersion, affusion, or immersion) provided the application of the water, and the pronunciation of the words, form one moral action, the whole being a figure of our soul's redemption by Jesus Christ, in his own blood;—or a sign of the particular application of his sacred merits to us.—*Christ, writes St. Paul, loved the Church, and delivered himself up for it; that he might sanctify it, cleansing it by the laver of water in the word of life.* (Eph. v. 26.)

My Brethren, I beg you to observe that we do not pretend even to insinuate, that sanctification consists in the external ceremony of baptism with water, any more than we believe that a written sentence can be said to contain an idea: which however, as a *sign* established between ourselves and

others, is mutually understood.—In the same manner, the ceremony of baptism, as the sign of spiritual regeneration in the blood of Christ, has been established between God and ourselves. But some will ask—Why should God have ordained this external rite?—Why did he not rather leave the grace wholly dependent upon some interior act of the soul, according to the notions of the Quakers*?

My Brethren, though in adult persons, some internal disposition is undoubtedly necessary, yet to call upon us to give a reason for the proceedings and decrees of God, is surely demanding more than can be expected of us. Let the Saviour then

* Quakerism is a species of Pelagianism, and the errors of the modern Quakers may be regularly traced through the reformed Protestant Zuinglius, (*in his work on true and false religion*) and Wickliff, (as Thomas Waldensis proves, vol. ii. c. 96,) up to Pelagius himself, as St. Austin evinces in his work on heresies, chap. 69. Pelagianism is the root of Protestantism, and was first condemned in 412, by a Council held at Carthage, and secondly, by the General Council of Ephesus in the year 431.

supply the cause and reason in his answer to Nicodemus; *Wonder not*, added he, *that I said, you must be born again. The Spirit breatheth where he will.—We speak what we know, and we testify what we have seen, and you receive not our testimony. If I have spoken to you earthly things, and you believe not, how will you believe it if I speak to you heavenly things?* (John iii. 7, 8. 11, 12.)

I will put it then to the candour of any one to say, if there can be a more simple and distinct declaration of the health and vigour which the soul is to receive from the grace of baptism? Can any thing more intelligibly explain to the humblest capacity, that justice and newness of life, to which we are born, after being purified in these cleansing waters? Nay, I will call upon any one, to say, whether spiritual regeneration, without this visible, and explicative sign of water, would not have been more difficult to conceive, preach, and perpetuate through generati-

ons, than marked and distinguished, as it has been, for eighteen hundred years, by this sensible and external rite? *If I have spoken to you earthly things, and you believe not; how will you believe it, if I shall speak to you heavenly things?* (John iii. 12.)

Moreover, my Brethren, I wish you particularly to observe, that this divine institution, or sacred ceremony, is for the forgiveness of sins; *Going therefore, teach ye all nations, baptizing them—he who believes and is baptized shall be saved, but he that believeth not, shall be condemned.* (Matt. xxviii. 19. Mark xvi. 16.) Which observation will throw an important light upon many other sacred rites of the Church of God. For in this institution we not only see a sacrament for the general remission of past sins, but as Jesus Christ makes man himself the instrument to administer it to his fellow creatures, he delegates to him a power withheld from the very angels. In these waters of purification every species

of sin is obliterated from the soul; whilst marked with the precious blood of the Lamb, she rises in the sight of heaven brilliant and pure like the virgin sun. And although it be true, that the general delegation of this ministerial power is a strong instance of the goodness of God to man, nevertheless, it is to be remarked, that it is no dereliction of what he owes to his own sovereignty, because always exercised in his name. *I baptize thee in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.*

Having explained the nature of the sacrament of baptism, I must now speak of it, as a condition for salvation, in the new law. My Brethren, Jesus Christ was undoubtedly at liberty to receive us into grace, on his own terms, and to prescribe any condition he pleased. Having then, in right of this prerogative, instituted the sacred ceremony of baptism,—so simple and easy, that none can want the means of faithfully complying with the obliga-

tion,—is it surprising that he made the necessity of this rite absolute upon all ; declaring, that *unless a man be so born again of water and of the Holy Ghost, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God ?* (John iii. 5.) These are the words of the Redeemer himself ;—this the decision of him, who was to open the gates of heaven to us. Say not then, that the decree is hard.—If every individual is master of his own gifts,—God, who is the creditor, not the debtor, owes us nothing. But, you object, all cannot comply, and it is unjust to be partial.—My Brethren, if, by extending favour to one, an injury is done to another, such partiality is unjust. But if, in shewing partiality to one, or more, no injury is done to any, then no injustice is committed ;—such preference is lawful and just, and what we all practise, in our intercourse with each other.

My Friends, the essence of God is justice ; and yet we are all more or less the objects of his kind election ;—and on the principle of

preference and predilection, he seems to act throughout. *The same Spirit worketh, dividing to every one according as he will.* (1 Cor. xii. 11.) His graces, it is true, are thus distributed in an unequal measure; nevertheless, who has a right to complain, if still we are all in his debt? *Friend!* said he to the labourer in the vineyard, who complained that others received too much, *I do thee no wrong;—take what is thine, and go thy way;—is it not lawful for me to do what I will? Is thine eye evil because I am good?* (Matt. xx. 13, 14, 15.) No, it is only a stronger motive for gratitude and fidelity.

My Brethren, it is admitted there may be many in the new law, who are both physically and morally prevented from reaping the full advantage of the grace of redemption: persons, for instance, who have never enjoyed the exercise of their faculties. But has God ever engaged to do more, than by the *seed of the woman to crush the dominion of the serpent*, to restore the

human race to favour with heaven, *and to send a deliverer in whom all nations shall be blessed?* (Gen. iii. 15.—xii. 3.)

But you ask, are unbaptized infants therefore, and others, who die innocent of actual sin, to be for ever excluded from the kingdom of God's glory? Yes, my Brethren, such is the unalterable decree of heaven*; yet hence you are not to infer that these souls are to be condemned to eternal punishments. No! my Friends, they may possibly be destined to enjoy a state of beatitude, though it be certain, that they will never be allowed to enter in-

* The Jewish Pasch, which was a figure of man's redemption from the bondage of sin by Jesus Christ, was only to be shared by those who had received the mark of *circumcision*. *And the Lord said to Moses and Aaron: This is the service of the Phase, no foreigner shall eat of it. But every bought servant shall be circumcised, and so shall eat. The stranger and the hireling shall not eat thereof—and if any stranger be willing to dwell among you, and to keep the Phase of the Lord, all his males shall be first circumcised, and then shall he celebrate it according to the manner: and he shall be as he that is born in the land: but if any man be uncircumcised, he shall not eat thereof.* (Exod. xii.)

to the glorious presence of God. - *Unless a man be born again of water and the Holy Ghost, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.* (Johu iii. 5.) And St. John in the Apocalypse, figuratively describing under the Jewish tribes the number that should be saved, expressly declares, *These are they who come out of tribulation, and have washed their robes, and have made them white in the blood of the Lamb—the servants of our God are signed in their foreheads.* (Apoc. vii.)

If then any of the holy fathers have made use of a harsher expression than the loss of heaven, in speaking of the state of these souls, it was only in reference to that immense weight of glory and exalted inheritance, to which they can never attain. The incalculable misfortune therefore attending the privation of baptism, in the new law, will be a punishment, rather of the negative, than of the positive kind; for logically speaking, it is not the want of baptism, which *deprives* them of their title to happiness in heaven, but, not having

received baptism, they have *acquired* no title to that inheritance;—and therefore remain, as they were, excluded from what that rite would have enabled them to enjoy. Thus, were I to present an individual with a promissory note or bond, it could not be said that I deprived others of the same, whom I did not equally favour. Moreover, consider how many among these souls, may have been mercifully snatched from the torments of hell-fire, to which the abuse of more extraordinary graces might have brought them! *All the ways of the Lord are full of mercy and truth*, says the Psalmist; (*Ps. xxiv. 10.*) and Jesus Christ speaking of the unfortunate sinner, says, *it were better for him if that man had not been born.* (*Matt. xxvi. 24.*)

But let us suppose a case, you rejoin, where a man has the desire of baptism, without the means of receiving it*.—My Brethren, it

* Persons situated in the Colonies and far removed from every opportunity of being visited by a Catholic Priest, are often desirous of knowing the proper course to be pursued by them, in regard to slaves and other dependents immedi-

has always been the traditional faith of the Church, that such desire accompanied with faith in Christ and sincere contrition for

ately under their controul and direction. Let them then endeavour to prepare these persons for the reception of baptism, by making them understand all that is contained in the Lord's Prayer—Hail Mary—and Apostles' Creed, and by disposing them to recite Acts of Faith, Hope and Charity. They are also to be instructed faithfully to observe the commandments of God, and of his Church as far as circumstances will permit. Whilst the moral maxim to be enforced on their minds is, *to do to another as they would wish to be done by*. They should also be taught to seek the divine pardon of their sins by fervent acts of contrition, through which even the guilt of mortal offences will be entirely remitted.

The following is a form of an Act of Contrition which may be used.

O God, at the recollection that I must be called before thee, to give an account of myself, I am filled with regret for my past life, stained with so many sins committed against thy divine Majesty. I now detest them, O Lord, from the very bottom of my heart, because they are offensive to thy pure and infinite goodness, and I return to thee in sincere repentance, ready to confess them to thy minister; I for ever renounce every evil habit and occasion of sin, most earnestly imploring thy forgiveness, through the merits of Jesus Christ my Saviour; and should it please thee, that I continue to live, I beg thee to grant me, that from this hour, the remainder of my life may be devoted

sin, will be accepted by God ; which may be called the baptism of the Holy Ghost.— But the impossibility of actual baptism is always implied, and the same is to be said of those, who are purified in their own blood by martyrdom, or who forfeit life for the sake of Christ. *Greater love than this*, said Jesus, *no man hath, that a man lay down his life for his friends.* (John xv. 13.)

I have now then most earnestly to entreat Christians in general, to direct their attention to this important point, and to examine if there be any prudent reasons to believe, that they have yet to receive that sacred rite. For, my Brethren, such having been for many years the fatal indifference of men towards religion, insecurity is become so evident, that, in a concern so interesting as the one before us, it behoves individuals to take no assurances upon trust. When we recollect the sad consequences in law, which often arise

to true contrition and penance, in the faithful observance of all thy commandments, through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

from the careless formation of wills and deeds,—how families suffer through generations, by the error of one man, let us also consider the dangers to which we are exposed on the subject of baptism, in this age of Socinian incredulity ;—let us attend to the negligent mode, in which it is administered in many hospitals and workhouses, and likewise reflect on the great number, whose baptism being deferred to their riper years, are never baptized at all*.

* It may be asked why it has latterly been customary to baptize Protestants when they are received into the Catholic Church—Is not baptism valid when conferred by a Protestant? As in matters of this consequence the Catholic principle is always to be on the safe side, the Catholic clergy are in the habit of privately repeating what is essential to this sacrament, (that is, pouring water on the forehead with the usual form of words) in order to make sure of what might have been incorrectly and invalidly administered. For whilst Protestants are so divided about the divinity of Jesus Christ, that numbers either doubt or deny it, (for which witness the act of parliament emancipating the impugnors of the Trinity from the penalty of the law, passed in An. Dom. 1812,) what confidence can be placed in their due administration of this important sacra-

It is to you, parents and guardians, however, that I more particularly address myself;—let me exhort you without delay to consecrate your tender care to Jesus Christ, by this mysterious ceremony;—*Suffer*, says he, *the little children and forbid them not to come to me, for the kingdom of God is for such.* (Matt. xix. 14.) You know the perils to which, from sickness and other accidents, their helpless age is exposed; defer not then this religious rite, which is to make them brethren of Jesus Christ, and heirs to his everlasting kingdom. Their high interests through eternity are entrusted to you their natural protectors; and should you neglect to act, as the severe command of God has enjoined, never ending maledictions and reproaches will be upon you.

Anabaptists, Dissenters and others, excuse me if I address you personally, —
 ment? Catholics however only repeat this rite *conditionally*, or with the supposition that it had not been previously administered.

ye, who know what it is to have a parent's care, suffer not yourselves to be deceived by the flimsy reasoning of your deluding instructors. To take the safe side, is what you are bound to do, when you are deciding for another. But, your minister tells you, that baptism is not necessary for the salvation of infants, and that these words of Jesus Christ, *unless a man be born again of water and the Holy Ghost, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God*, (John iii. 5.) as little refer to a condition of absolute and universal necessity, as the following; *except you eat the flesh of the Son of Man, and drink his blood, you shall not have life in you*. (John vi. 54.) In short, that the one precept is not more binding than the other.

In reply then, my Brethren, the disparity is so evident, that I could scarcely have supposed it necessary to point it out. If you only attend to the formation of the two propositions, you will immediately perceive that the one is uni-

versal, whilst the other is only a *general* ordinance. The first applies to every individual, *unless a man be born again*; the second only to those particular persons he was then addressing, *except ye eat*, as also such as might hereafter be in similar circumstances:—consequently the one precept is *absolutely* decreed, whilst the other is only *conditionally* enjoined.

Still you believe the question may be resolved into one of fact; has it been, you ask, the practice of the Church from the beginning to baptize infants? Yes, my Brethren, such has always been the practice, as I will prove to you by the testimony of some of the most ancient of the holy Fathers.—St. Irenæus, who lived in the second age, says, “Christ came to save all men through himself, all I say, (he continues) who through him are born again unto God, infants, little ones, and children, and youths, and elder persons*.” And when Fidus, about

* Advers. Hær. lib. ii, c. 39.

the year 205, consulted St. Cyprian as to the proper day for conferring baptism on infants, this holy Martyr, together with 60 other Bishops, gave this answer. “As
 “to what relates to the case of infants
 “whom you said should not be baptized
 “on the second or third day after they are
 “born, not even before the eighth day,
 “thinking the law of circumcision should
 “still be attended to, we have been of
 “quite a different opinion in our council,
 “in which none have approved of what
 “you have proposed; but all judged on
 “the contrary, that God’s mercy and
 “grace are not to be denied to any individual
 “born of man. For as the Lord says in the
 “Gospel, *the Son of Man is not come to de-*
 “*stroy the souls of men, but to save them;*
 “as far as lies in our power, we ought not
 “to let any soul perish.” And St. Augustin expressly says, “that the practice of baptizing infants, had been undoubtedly delivered by our Lord and the apostles.” *

* Aug. de Peccat.

If then we read of individuals, in the first ages of the Church, whose baptism was deferred to a later period of their lives, the delay is to be ascribed to the peculiar circumstances of their situation; some of them being born of Pagan parents, as St. Augustin, St. Ambrose, and many others, whilst not a few were also deterred by the terrors of Pagan persecution. Nor must I forget to advert to one point particularly in proof of infant baptism, which is the ancient and universal practice of appointing sponsors, whose particular business is to answer for those, who are not able to answer for themselves.

The baptism of Jesus Christ moreover, as described in St. Matthew, presents another proof of what I have said, in the two points of this discourse, on the efficacy, and necessity of this sacrament. The Evangelist informs us that *Jesus came from Galilee to Jordan, unto John, to be baptized by him. But John stayed him, saying, I ought to be baptized by thee, and comest thou to me? And Jesus answering,*

said to him ; suffer it to be so now, for so it becometh us to fulfil all justice. (Matt. iii. 13, 14, 15.) Suffer it to be, not that I have need of it, but that I may give an example to others,—for so it is that man is to become justified. Then he suffered him. And Jesus being baptized, forthwith came out of the water ; and lo the heavens were opened to him ; and he saw the Spirit of God descending as a dove, and coming upon him. And behold a voice from heaven, saying ; this is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased. (Matt. iii. 16, 17.)

Before I conclude this instruction I cannot help adverting to those sublime ceremonies which the Catholic Church employs in the solemn administration of baptism, and which so strikingly express the mysterious graces therein imparted to us. I should premise that all the ceremonies of the Catholic Church are mystical in their signification, and designed to be symbols of the effects wrought in the soul by the operations of grace, which is decidedly the cha-

racter of those ceremonial forms, which she employs in the administration of baptism*. On the day of the soul's deliverance from the bondage of Egypt,—when the child of Adam is to be spiritually conducted through *the red sea*, preparatory to his entrance into *the land of promise*, (Exod. x. iv.)—when the waves of the spiritual *Jordan* are to be *rolled back* in their course, (Jos. iii.) and this new-born is to be washed in the purifying waters of the Christian *Bethsaida*, (John v.) the exulting parent assembles his joyful relatives at the baptistry of the Church, where the little *stranger* is met by the minister of religion, who exclaims to him as he approaches, *What dost thou ask of the Church of God?—Faith*, he answers by his sponsors, *and life everlasting*. Then, like Moses from the mountain of Sinai, the minister declares; *If thou desirest to enter into life, keep the commandments*, and breathing into his face the *spirit of life*, he

* See the form of administering baptism in my Exposition of Liturgy or Book of Common Prayers.

imprints on his *forehead* and his heart the mysterious *symbol* of Jesus Christ, and prays that he may be docile to his instructions and faithful to his commandments. He next lays upon his tongue a particle of *salt*, as the emblem of heavenly wisdom, and beseeches the Author of eternal truth, to conduct this soul to the saving waters of regeneration, and eternal happiness in his kingdom. He now solemnly conjures the enemy of man to surrender up his captive to Jesus Christ, and once more signs him in his *forehead* with the *mark* of the Redeemer: *I saw them signed on their foreheads.* (Apoc. vii. 3.)

Then in the midst of canticles of jubilation, the minister of religion introduces this new subject of the church into the sanctuary of the eternal God, where he publicly makes his profession of faith, renounces *Satan, the world, and its pomps*, and is anointed the elect of heaven. The Priest of God now throws off the penitential *purple*, and clothing himself in the

white stole of heavenly purity, advances towards the catechumen, and again solemnly calls upon him to profess his faith in *God the Father Almighty,—in Jesus Christ his only Son,—and in the Holy Ghost.* He requires moreover a distinct declaration from him of adherence to the *Catholic Church,—as well as of his belief in the communion of saints,—the forgiveness of sins,—the resurrection of the body—and life everlasting.*

Armed with this faith, he is then led forward to the baptismal font, supported by the God-fathers and God-mothers, and after *regenerating* him in those waters of grace, and anointing him with the sacred *chrism of salvation*, the minister of God invests him with the *white robe* of purity, or the mantle of the Eternal, and placing in his hands the *lamp* of charity and faith, dismisses the new Christian *in peace*: whilst the baptismal bell proclaims his happy predestination to a *lively hope* of glory, and enrollment among the co-heirs

of Jesus Christ. Then returning to the house of his *Fathers*, a crown of flowers is placed upon his temples,—a feast of joy is prepared,—and he is restored to the bosom of his anxious mother, as one of *achosen generation*,—*a kingly priesthood*,—*a holy nation*,—*a purchased people*. (1 Peter ii. 9.)

Such, my Brethren, are the grand and sublime forms, under which the Catholic Church figures the graces conferred in baptism on the Christian soul. They are forms which necessarily excite many pleasing sympathies in the mind, and are not less instructive and explicative of the effects produced, than worthy of that immortal Church, whose whole religious worship is exclusively designed to honour God, and edify the creature. Let philosophy prize the jargon of her schools, and explain herself to the *sages of worldly science*;—these ceremonies speak to the human heart, and are calculated to leave their impressions on the minds of the illiterate, as well as of the learned,—of the savage, as well as the

member of classical society. Infine they cannot fail to excite in all a reverence for the Majesty of God, and the sanctity of his religion.



SERMON XXXIII.

ON THE SACRAMENT OF CONFIRMATION.

He that confirmeth us with you in Christ and that hath anointed us, is God; who also hath sealed us and given us a pledge of the spirit in our hearts. (2 Cor. i. 21, 22.)

OF all the duties which fall upon the religious instructor, there is none so arduous and unpleasant as that of teaching men what they are unfit to learn; yet it forms a difficulty to which we are continually exposed. Can I convince the drunkard, for instance, that the sober man has a real horror of intemperance? Will the avaricious speculator believe me, when I inform him that honesty exists independently of human laws? Will the adulterer and lascivious libertine acknowledge, when I affirm it,

that any souls are so chaste and innocent as never to have conceived a desire that was not pure and holy?

Revealed religion then is in the same circumstance as practical morality. Can I persuade, for example, the free-thinker or worldly Christian, that there is such a thing as divine grace; and that the soul rises in favour with God in proportion as she becomes rich in this heavenly treasure? Will they not be inclined to smile upon me, with an air of pity or contempt, when I offer to shew that the acceptance and increase of this grace are within our own power and dependant upon a religious duty, called a Sacrament? Will they not be disposed to scoff at such religion, and to insult its ministers? Unfortunately for us, we have to teach men revealed religion, and they will have none but the religion of reason;—we are to call upon them for faith, and incredulity is the vice of the age.—Such are the difficulties, my Friends, against which I have to contend, whilst

I preach to you the divine Sacrament of Confirmation; a sacrament of the Catholic Church established on the authority of Scripture,—the authority of the holy Fathers,—and the decisions and universal practice of the Church.

Confirmation, my Brethren, in the sense of the Catholic Church, signifies a holy and sacred rite, rendering more perfect and complete that sanctification which was obtained in baptism, and consecrating the soul in a much more particular manner to the love and service of God. A Bishop, who is the *ordinary** dispenser of this gift and mystery, having prayed, anoints the person with blessed oil or *Chrism* †, using in the Latin Church this form of words;—

* In cases of emergency and necessity this Sacrament may be administered by a priest, as it has frequently been done. See Bellarmine.

† *Chrism* consists of oil and balsam solemnly blessed by a Bishop, as we are taught by tradition. Dionisius the Ariopagite says, in his Eccles. Hist. cap. iv. p. 8. that “the composition of the ointment, is a collection of sweet smelling drugs.”

“I sign thee with the sign of the Cross, I confirm thee with the Chrism of Salvation, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.”

My Brethren, since the principle of Protestants is to admit what is grounded on the authority of the written word, the retaining of this ceremony in the Established Church of England, * at once proves it to be clearly marked in Scripture; and the question, whether it is to be termed a Sacrament, or a sacred rite, I consider as a mere verbal difference: since provided they view the ceremony, as a divine institution, practised by the apostles, and conferring grace, (as their liturgy

* A Rubric in the Prayer Book of Edward 6th—says, “for as much as Confirmation is administered to them that be baptized, that by imposition of hands and prayer they may receive strength and defence against all temptations to sin, and the assaults of the world and the devil, it is most meet to be administered when children come to that age that partly by the frailty of their own flesh, partly by the assaults of the world and the devil, they begin to be in danger to fall into sundry kinds of sins.”—It also speaks of the anointment with *Chrism*.

and the very word *Confirmation* express) we are agreed as to the substance, though we differ upon the name.

My Brethren, I wish you particularly to observe, that the promise of the Holy Ghost had been often made by Jesus Christ to his disciples, assuring them that the Paraclete should succeed to him, and dwell amongst them ; *the Father*, said he, *shall give you another Paraclete, that he may abide with you for ever—the Spirit of Truth whom the world cannot receive—you shall not be left orphans—and he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your mind whatsoever I shall have said to you.* (John xiv. 16, 17, 18. 26.) And moreover St. Peter, in his first sermon to the Jews, informs them, that the Spirit of God should be poured forth on all flesh, as foretold by the prophet Joel ; *upon their sons, and daughters, their servants and handmaids—and they should receive the Holy Ghost. For the promise, he continues, is to you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off*

whomsoever the Lord our God shall call.
(Acts ii. 17. 38, 39.)

Now, my Brethren, whoever is acquainted with the Scriptures must know, that by the coming of the Holy Ghost into the soul, is meant a special influence of the divine Spirit over all our actions and desires ;—a free offer of graces, which excite to virtue ;—a more close and intimate union between the soul and God. It supposes a species of spiritual adoption or dedication, which is to entitle her to his most distinguished favours, make her the temple of his habitation, and thus strengthen her against her spiritual enemies. Of the administration of this Sacrament by the apostles, St. Luke has left us an account in their Acts : *Now when the apostles who were in Jerusalem, he says, had heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent unto them Peter and John. Who when they were come, prayed for them, that they might receive the Holy Ghost. For he was not as yet come upon them : but they were*

only baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.
(Acts viii. 14, 15, 16.)

Thus, my Brethren, the Scripture tells us, that although many at Samaria believed in the Lord Jesus Christ, and had been baptized, still something more was to be done; for the holy Spirit was not as yet come upon any of them in that special way, which was to make them his tabernacles, though they had been *sanctified* by him, in the *laver of water*, and prepared for his reception. The apostles therefore sent to them two of their body, *Peter and John*, who having first prayed, *then laid their hands upon them, and they received the Holy Ghost.* (Acts viii. 17.)

Here three things deserve particular notice; first, the persons had previously received baptism; secondly, the apostles were sent all the way from Jerusalem to Samaria to administer this sacrament to them, though Philip was upon the spot; thirdly, they administered it with prayer, and the imposition of hands. *And when*

Simon saw that by the imposition of the hands of the apostles, the Holy Ghost was given, he offered them money ; saying ; give me also this power, that on whomsoever I shall lay my hands, he may receive the Holy Ghost. (Acts viii. 18.)

The apostle moreover in his Epistle to the Hebrews, says that he has to instruct the faithful, *in the doctrine of baptism and the imposition of hands ;* and immediately after seems to allude to the three sacraments of Baptism, Eucharist, and Confirmation, which in the beginning of Christianity, it was common for persons to receive at one and the same time ; he speaks of those *who were once illuminated,—have tasted also the heavenly gift—and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost. (Heb. vi. 4.)* All which is again strengthened by St. Paul's language and proceeding at Ephesus. St. Luke inform us that when he came there, *he found certain disciples, and he said to them ; have you received the Holy Ghost since ye believed ? but they said to him we have not so*

much as heard whether there be a Holy Ghost. And he said to them, in what then were you baptized? He consequently supposes them to have been baptized, though he doubted whether they had received the other gift of the Holy Ghost. They said they had received the baptism of John. Upon which, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. And when Paul had imposed his hands on them, the Holy Ghost came upon them, and they spoke with tongues and prophesied. (Acts xix.)

My Brethren, my object has been (and I think I have succeeded in my endeavours) to establish from Scripture the Sacrament of Confirmation; or to prove to you, from the written word, that the apostles conferred a particular grace upon the Christians of Samaria by imposing their hands upon them, and consequently that their successors, in the episcopal order, are empowered to do the same.

Tradition has moreover informed us that they accompanied the imposition of hands

with an anointment of sacred oil or chrism, significative of the divine grace communicated;—and though the Evangelist, in this place, has undoubtedly been silent on this particular ceremony, still there are other passages in scripture, in which a direct allusion, or reference is made to the anointment, as constituting the very essence of the sacrament. St. Paul writing to the Corinthians, says, *now he that confirmeth us with you in Christ and that hath anointed us, is God: who also hath sealed us, and given us a pledge of the Spirit in our hearts.* (2 Cor. i. 21, 22.)

Now, my Brethren, in these passages we discover a reference, not only to the faith and practice, but to the very language of the Catholic Church. Here mention is made of *the seal*,—for like Baptism, Confirmation imposes a *character* on the soul, and can therefore never be received but once;—*the unction and imposition of hands* are also clearly noticed as a mysterious doctrine, and he calls it a pledge given to God of the

Spirit in our hearts; infine we are told it is **DIVINE CONFIRMATION**.

I must really then confess my astonishment, at the conduct of those dissenting Protestant brethren, who set aside this divine mystery, and consider this institution in the mere light, of a catechetical examination, or confession of faith before the Church. What is there in these passages which can justify such an arbitrary explanation? As the written word is posterior to the apostolic acts it describes, so let the act explain the text. For since all sacramental institutions came from Christ, and were certainly practised before they were spoken of by the Evangelists, so any favourable evidence from the written word becomes strong proof of the fact of the institution, though it cannot be considered as a full explanation or description of them, unless the writer had professedly undertaken to give it.

Now, my Friends, in the passages of Scripture and the apostolic acts I have

cited, mention, as you must allow, is frequently made of an exterior, visible, and instrumental sign which was always attended with a spiritual effect; and as this is the very definition of a sacrament, Christians are only consistent who consider it as such:—and therefore to explain it as a mere ceremony, upon no authority but that of fancy,—by no rule but that of caprice, is to take a most arbitrary and unjustifiable course. Truth is ever consistent with itself, and as one text of Scripture must not be so explained as to disjoint and eclipse another, it really surprises me, that our adversaries, with their great respect for the written word, should not see the necessity of a concordance in all its parts, and that their explanations render many passages incompatible with each other. If they reject the doctrine of grace conferred in the Sacrament of Confirmation, let them say why such particular mention is made of two of the apostles being sent to those, who baptized by

Philip at Samaria, had not received the Holy Ghost?—Why is it added that these came and with prayer *laid their hands upon them, and then they received the Holy Ghost*? If there was not here some mystery, beyond a profession of faith, why did Simon even wish to purchase the secret with money? Let them say why the coming of the Holy Ghost is so often mentioned in conjunction with the imposition of hands. What connection have they, if not sacramental?

My Protestant Friends, will you explain these passages, or leave them unexplained? If you do not admit their literal interpretation, you must read them in a mystical and metaphorical sense, which would totally set aside the authority of scripture. I admit that some expressions of scripture are to be taken in a metaphorical sense, but only such as cannot be taken in another. Thus when Jesus Christ says that his Father is a *husbandman* and himself a *door*, these expressions

are figurative and must be so explained, because they can be explained no otherwise. But if an individual is to explain figuratively a passage which may be understood literally, then with equal right he may so explain a whole chapter, nay the whole gospel, as many have done ; and thus substituting his figurative interpretations for the text, set aside the whole authority of scripture.

But you say, let us have a little reason. —My Friends, as much as you please ; at least, nothing that is contrary to that faculty. You say, if we have received the grace of justification and spiritual adoption in baptism, (a character or gift never to be forfeited) what need have we of a second coming of the Holy Ghost ? Can another give what we already possess ? Besides, we do not witness the same miraculous signs, by which the Holy Ghost testified himself in the beginning of the Church.

My Brethren, I think you must be sensible that though baptized, we all need an

increase of grace and strength.—Now while Baptism makes us the adopted children of God, Confirmation is to fortify us in the spirit, and qualify us to resist the enemies of our salvation with the courage of soldiers of Jesus Christ. It is to arm us against vice, and make us resolute in the combat even unto death. The prophet Isaias describing the gifts and graces of the Holy Ghost, says that he is *the spirit of wisdom, and of understanding, the spirit of counsel and of fortitude, the spirit of knowledge and of godliness, and of the fear of the Lord* : (Isaias xi. 2.) graces my Brethren, to which, as Christians, you should continually aspire,—since they will conduct you to the perfection of a holy life, and greatly increase the measure of your eternal recompense.

The miraculous signs which accompanied the first preaching of the gospel, and specially distinguished the early dispensations of this mystery, were no ways essential to that divine religion to which they bore testi-

mony.—As auxiliaries of faith, they were suited to the temporal and local circumstances of the church, but were not universally dispensed with the Holy Ghost, even to the first Christians, as we may observe by the Epistle of St. Paul to the Corinthians. *Now there are diversities of graces, he says, but the same spirit,—and there are diversities of operations ;—are all apostles, are all prophets, are all doctors, are all workers of miracles, have all the grace of healing, do all speak with tongues, do all interpret ? But be zealous for the better gifts ; and I shew unto you yet a more excellent way.* (1 Cor. xii. 4, 29, 30, 31.) The apostle even censures many of the faithful for their indiscreet exercise of the power of miracles, and insinuates that the invisible mystery of grace was much more perfect and enviable, than the outward display of signs and an unprofitable manifestation of gifts. In fine, they ceased with the necessity, —and *faith* supplied their place.

But I have moreover said that this sacrament is also grounded on the testimony of the holy fathers. Tertullian, one of the most ancient of them, embraces the whole ceremony, in his work on the resurrection of the flesh, in a very few words. Alluding, as Bellarmine remarks*, to the unction, the sign of the cross, and the imposition of hands, he says, "The flesh is anointed, that the soul may be sanctified;—the flesh is signed, that the soul may be strengthened;—the flesh is overshadowed by the imposition of the hand, that the soul may be enlightened by the Spirit." And, moreover, as the same learned controvertist has observed, he joins this sacrament with Baptism and the Eucharist.—Having just before said, "that the flesh is washed, that the soul may become immaculate," he finally adds, "the flesh feeds on the body of Christ, that the soul may subsist on God." Again, in his book on baptism,

* Tom. 5. fol. 389.

he says, "then coming forth from the water, we are anointed with the blessed unction :—the ointment is spread over us carnally, but it is spiritually that it profits ;—then the hand is imposed by way of benediction, invoking and inviting the Holy Ghost."*

St. Cyprian who lived in the third century of the Church, in his last Epistle says, the Christian " must be anointed of God, and have the grace of Christ within him." And in another Epistle † he writes, " then indeed they become fully sanctified and the Sons of God, if they are born of both sacraments."‡ St. Augustin also says, " that by the anointment is understood the Sacrament of Chrism, which indeed in the nature of visible signs, is sacred like baptism itself." St. Leo likewise

* Against Marcion, also speaking of the sacraments he says, Christ " did not condemn the water of the creation, in which he washed his followers, nor the oil with which he anointed them." Lib. 1.

† Ep. 1. lib. 2.

‡ Lib. 2. c. 104.

in his sermons* writes, "Stand firm in the faith which you have confessed before many witnesses, and in which having been born by water and the Holy Ghost, you received the Chrism of Salvation, and the sign of eternal life." And again he says, "Those who have received baptism from persons not professing the true faith, are not to be re-baptized but only confirmed, by the invocation of the Holy Ghost, with imposition of hands." †

Lastly, I say, this Sacrament rests on the authority and universal practice of the Church. In the 38th canon of the ancient Council of Illiberis, on lay baptism administered in cases of necessity, it is decreed, "that if the person survive he shall be conducted to the Bishop, and if there be any neophytes or newly-baptized Christians, they shall be confirmed by the same." ‡ The ancient Council of Laodicea

* Serm. 4. de Nat. Dom.

† Epi. ad Nic. c. 7.

‡ Canon 2.

also requires the Novatians to be anointed with the holy Chrism; and in the 48th canon says, “that the baptized persons must receive the holy Chrism and be made partakers of the kingdom of God?” In fine, without mentioning the canonical decrees of other councils, I shall simply call your attention to the general council of Trent, which enforces the doctrine of the Church in these terms. “If any one shall say, that the confirmation of baptised persons is an idle ceremony, and not a true and proper Sacrament; or that formerly it was nothing more, than a certain examination in which young persons gave an account of their faith before the Church; anathema be to him.” *

But, as I have often observed, there is nothing which more strongly characterizes a point of doctrine as revealed, than the circumstance of its being the object of universal faith, and received by all nations.

* Sess. 7. de Confirm. cap. 1.

To prove to you therefore that sacramental confirmation is thus catholically received, preached and administered, I wish you particularly to advert to the act of re-union of the Greeks and Latins in the general council of Florence, where every point of difference was fully discussed, without any division arising on the article of this sacrament, all being thereon agreed. *

* Let more modern Greeks also speak for themselves. A celebrated authority amongst them, having explained the ceremonies of baptism, says, " then (the priest or the bishop) anoints him who has been baptized with the holy Chrism or *Muron*, which besides oil is composed of all sorts of precious perfumes, which symbolically represent the great power together with the the variety of operations and gifts of the Holy Ghost, and the sweet odour of sanctity. We receive it also as the sign and the seal of Jesus Christ; who is called Christ because he corporally had in himself all the powers of the Holy Ghost, which he received from the Father. *It is what Isaiah* said in these words; THE SPIRIT OF THE LORD IS UPON ME, *and therefore he has anointed me*; and through the grace which we receive from him in the Chrism, we are called *Christians*, and even the Christians of the Lord; for he does not refuse to communicate this name to us. The bishop, in anoint-

Lastly, I will instance the name *Christian* which signifies *anointed*, and which

ing the newly-baptized person, says, The seal of the gift of the Holy Ghost, Amen: Marking by these words that the unction is the sign of Jesus Christ, because it is done with the sign of the cross, on him who receives it, and confers on him the gift of the Holy Ghost." (*Perpetuité de la foi*. v. 5. p. 158.

Another eminent writer of the modern Greek Church says, "The second sacrament is the oil of the sacred unction, which commenced when the Holy Ghost came down upon the apostles, sealing them with his holy grace, that they might firmly and continually preach the faith of Jesus Christ; and all baptized persons have need of this help. But as formerly the Holy Ghost came down on the apostles in the shape of fire, and diffused his gifts over them; so at present when the priest anoints the person who has been baptized, with the holy Chrism, the gifts of the Holy Ghost are shed upon him, as clearly appears by the words which the priest uses in administering this sacrament. *The seal of the gift of the Holy Ghost*; which is the same as if he was to say, by the unction of this holy Chrism, you are sealed and confirmed in the gifts of the Holy Ghost; which you receive for confirmation in the Christian faith you profess. This unction of the holy Chrism; or to speak more properly, the effect of this unction, from the time of the apostles, has been produced by the imposition of hands. Wherefore the scripture says,

was probably conferred upon the Brethren at Antioch, on account of the very cere-

they laid their hands upon them, and they received the Holy Ghost. And it has been continued with the unction of the holy Chrism, as St. Denis Areopagus, disciple of St. Paul, teaches." (*Idem.* p. 161.)

I will even present to you the form of Confirmation as laid down in the Liturgy of the Egyptian and Syrian Christians. After baptism is completed, it says, "then the priest makes the sign of the cross with Chrism on all their members, and three times on the forehead, saying, *N. receive the seal and the sign of the holy Chrism of the good odour of Jesus Christ our God, by the seal of the true faith, and by the completion of the pledge or of the gift of the Holy Ghost, unto life everlasting, Amen*" (*Idem.* p. 163.) See also this sacrament described by the Metropolitan of Moscow, in Pinkerton's *Present State of the Greek Church in Russia*, page 178. "The Chrism," writes the publisher, "though a distinct mystery, is always administered immediately after baptism, and is properly the confirmation of the Greek Church. This mystery is performed by the priest anointing the baptized person with holy ointment, with which he makes the sign of the cross on his forehead, eyes, nostrils, mouth, ears, breast, hands and feet; repeating these words at each sign: '*The seal of the gift of the Holy Ghost.*'" This ointment is composed of upwards of twenty different ingredients, and is prepared and consecrated with great ceremony, once a year, at Moscow, by a bishop, on Thursday in Passion-week."

mony of which we are treating. The Evangelist informs us that two other apostles were sent from Jerusalem to the Brethren at Antioch, as Peter and John had been sent to those converted at Samaria. Now, as we know, that these were sent to administer the gift of *the Holy Ghost*; for he had not as yet come upon them, but they were only baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus, (Acts viii. 16.) so we may conclude, that the others were sent to Antioch for the same purpose, and that *they also laid their hands upon them, and they received the Holy Ghost*; (Acts viii. 17.) and as this was accompanied with an anointing, so very probably the Greeks gave the disciples the name of *anointed*, which in their language is Christian. At Antioch, writes St. Luke, *the disciples were first named Christians*, (Acts xi. 26.) a name afterwards communicated to the whole Church. For though we admit that the word might have been formed from Christ, which also signifies the *Anointed* yet as Christ is only an epithet or predicate

that was given to Jesus by excellence, whose followers they were, I think the other interpretation would be preferred by the learned, and conclude this discourse in the hope that your faith has been fully confirmed in this important article of revelation.

It undoubtedly behoves us to contemplate the institutions of God with profound humility, and acknowledge the wisdom of the Creator in all his ordinances. In the consideration of the sacraments, nothing is more striking, than their easy form of administration; for the abundant graces they supply, little more is required, on the part of man, than faith and purity of heart. Then study these institutions, my Friends, not in those signs and forms under which they are administered, but rather in their effect, and in those properties ascribed to them by the sacred word;—approach them with reverence and affection,—elevate your hearts to heaven, and recollect that although you are dust and ashes in relation

to this world, your prospects in eternity are great and splendid, and your expectations from the hands of God, unbounded.



SERMON XXXIV.

ON THE SACRAMENT OF THE EUCHARIST,
OR OF THE LORD'S SUPPER.

My flesh is for the life of the world.

(John vi. 52.)

IT is singular, that in addressing Christians we should meet with any who hesitate to receive this heavenly word, *My flesh is for the life of the world.* (John vi. 52.) These individuals can believe that the human race was created to the very image of God,—that the Eternal devoted himself, in the person of his incarnate Son, to the redemption of the species,—that he gave his flesh upon the cross, and there poured forth the last drop of his blood in love for man,—that he drank off the cup of humiliation to the very dregs, and bore our sorrows to the grave;—yet, that *his flesh*

should be *for the life of the world, is a hard saying* they exclaim, *and who can hear it.* (John vi. 61.)

My Friends, since the Deity has proved his bounty to be immeasurable,—and has carried it to an excess, that exceeds all the powers of description and the force of utterance, it is surely natural to expect that some reason should be offered by those, who pertinaciously refuse to admit what is only an instance of the divine goodness and generosity to man. On what grounds then, my Friends, is it, that you oppose this heavenly doctrine, that Jesus Christ has given *his flesh for the life of the world?* Do you consider yourselves undeserving this act of divine love? and were you worthy of a redemption in blood? Perhaps you imagine, that no evidence exists, on which this article of faith can be established.—My Friends, Jesus Christ himself has said it; *My flesh is meat, and my blood is drink.* (John vi. 56.) Indeed, independently of any

authority, whether scriptural or ecclesiastical, there are considerations which should at all times greatly weigh with us, in assenting to this as well as to other proposed articles of faith.

I conceive, after what we have already witnessed, that the Christian must be predisposed to admit whatever tends to the union of God and his creature,—exalts human nature by grace,—and is a pledge of the love of God for man. He has received so many testimonies of divine predilection,—so many proofs of unlimited generosity, that it would be even unnatural to hesitate in assenting to a fact that speaks the love of the Creator, the exaltation of the creature, and an assurance of future glory. Banish then all your doubts and difficulties,—silence every suspicion, Jesus Christ has said, *his flesh is for the life of the world, and he that eateth him, the same shall live by him.* (John vi. 52. 58.) Let us, my Friends, make this our act of faith;—and with profound humility in the presence of

God, let us leave the completion of its object in the hands of him, who is so well able to effect what he has promised.

My Brethren, in discussing the sublime mystery of the eucharist, it will not be necessary for me, at least in the first instance, to advance any thing beyond this truth, that in this holy sacrament, Jesus Christ has given *his flesh for the life of the world*. By placing the question before you under this simple point of view, and prescinding, for the present, from every other consideration, I shall be able, on this occasion, to impose silence on controversy and dispute, and to address the different classes of my adversaries as well as Catholics, in language that will reflect the common sentiments of all. For whether I explain the pages of Roman Catholic writers, or unfold the catechism of the Church of England,—whether I repeat to you the catechistical instructions of the Dissenters, or the expositions of the Methodists,—or whether I read to you the confessions of the Lu-

therans, or the decisions of foreign Calvinists, the uniform tenor of all these writings will attest, that in the eucharist Jesus Christ has given *his flesh for the life of the world*. What joy then, my Friends, does the preacher and the controvertist experience when he observes, though only for a time, the wound of dissension close, and perceives one feeling and one sentiment uniting minds, that were so lately divided! a true image, my Brethren, of that emblem of *union* in the eucharist, to which the apostle alludes in these words, *We being many are one bread, one body, all that partake of one bread*. (1 Cor. x. 17.)

My Friends, I certainly may congratulate with you and myself, in having introduced the question to you in that shape and form, that will preclude every species of division from this assembly, and leave it, as I wish it to be found on every other point of doctrine, perfectly Catholic, in one mind and one judgment. I have therefore to express a wish, that you will confine your

faith to this one object, That in the sacrament of the eucharist, or in the celebration of *the Lord's Supper, his flesh is for the life of the world.* Without investigating the manner in which the mystery is operated, and suppressing all private and individual opinions, let us refer every question to that paramount authority, that is competent to decide. We can have no interest in any decision not founded in truth, and I see not, that on any other account, we are in the least concerned in an opinion. Let us then, my Friends, allow every other question to rest for the present ;—and let us only devote ourselves in the spirit of perfect charity, to the contemplation of that great mystery of faith, —In the sacrament of the eucharist, Jesus Christ has given *his flesh for the life of the world.*

When we consider the relationship in which man stands with God, deriving from him his very essence, his life and being ;—when we reflect that he is destined to be

united to the Creator for eternity in the kingdom of his glory,—that he is clothed with Jesus Christ in baptism, and made the temple of the Holy Ghost by the sacrament of confirmation, we can easily conceive how the liberal views of the Deity in regard to the human species, should dispose him to pour forth the torrent of his benedictions upon Christians in the sacrament of the eucharist, and thus place them even in this world on an equality with the most favoured children of heaven. As there is simply a veil suspended between us and God, intercepting the beauty and majesty of that beatific vision which is the delight and the bliss of angels,—as the Christian Church is only the antichamber of that holy temple into which all nations, tribes and tongues, will be collected to enjoy the everlasting feast of the heavenly Bridegroom, man insensibly participates in the eucharist of that invisible table of delight prepared for him in eternity ; just as he now contemplates by the eyes of faith, the hidden glory of the sacred Trinity, to

be afterwards fully revealed to him in the kingdom of God. *We see now through a glass in a dark manner, writes the apostle, but then face to face.* (1 Cor. xiii. 12.) *The just man lives by faith,* he adds, and he walks as if in the midst of a cloud, enveloped in the Deity.

The sacred scriptures tell us, that at the dedication of the temple of Jerusalem, the Lord entered into it in the shape of a cloud, so that *the priests could not stand to minister, for the glory of the Lord had filled the house of the Lord.* (3 Kings viii. 11.) In the same manner, the Deity enters into us, under the humble elements of bread and wine; and taking up his abode in the Christian soul, he embraces her,—he unites himself to her, and becomes with her *one bread, one body.* (1 Cor. x. 17.) My Friends, let not the greatness and sublimity of the mystery overpower your faith; remember the apostle has pronounced you *a chosen generation, a kingly priesthood, a holy nation, a purchased people; that you may declare his*

virtues, who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light. (1 Pet. ii. 9.)

It was also undoubtedly with the view of strengthening our faith in this mystery that St. Paul has said, *He that eats and drinks unworthily eats and drinks judgment to himself, not discerning the body of the Lord. (2 Cor. xi. 29.)*

My Friends, you can never form a true conception of that dignity which awaits the Christian hereafter, without reflecting, that he is the adopted child of heaven,—co-heir with Jesus Christ,—temple of the Holy Ghost,—and spouse of the heavenly Bridegroom ! I will admit that the true Spouse of Jesus Christ, so often alluded to in the sacred writings, is his Church ; but must also observe, that his Church is only collectively to him, what each soul is individually, and these expressions of affection and fidelity have not less reference to the Christian soul, than to the whole Church. Judge then, my Friends, of the relationship in which you may stand with the Deity,

by simply accepting the graces prepared for you, when he qualifies himself as a Bridegroom welcoming his Spouse to his throne and his kingdom; (*Apoc. xxi. 2.*) when he tells you that his delight is to be with the sons of men, (*Prov. viii. 31.*) and when he figures himself in the Book of Canticles, as one that had gone the city round, encountering every hazard in quest of his beloved. Behold him moreover bewailing the absence of that soul, that had separated from him, and employing such expressions of joy at her return, as most sensibly express the eagerness of Jesus Christ to unite himself to us. (*Cant. iii.*)

All this, my Friends, is daily reiterated and renewed in the most blessed sacrament of the eucharist, in which Jesus Christ has given *his flesh for the life of the world*. It is a sacrament in which the Saviour is concealed, in which he exists as a hidden God, described by the prophet Isaiah, (*xlvi. 15.*)—in which all the miracles, from the beginning of the world, stand surpass-

ed,—in which we discover the plenitude of mystery and fulness of grace, the pledge of our resurrection and a presage of future glory. Faith in the infinite goodness of God,—faith in all his promises and assurances, is undoubtedly requisite to receive this sublime word, which alone can explain his declarations of *abiding for ever* with his disciples, (John xvi. 22, 23.)—*of not leaving them orphans*, (John xvi. 18.)—*of being with them all days, even to the consummation of the world*. (Matt. xxviii. 20.) It alone can explain the efficacy of this life-giving bread, over the *manna* which our fathers did eat in the desert. (John vi. 49.) This alone can prove it to contain the principle of life, that *is for the life of the world*;—the true spirit of that tree of life,—planted in paradise, before which an angel stood guard with a flaming sword, lest our sinful and unworthy parent should eat thereof, (Gen. ii. 9, iii. 4.) This tree, now spreading like a vine within the pale of God's Church, and confided to the guardianship of the priests of

▼OD. III. He that descended

Jesus Christ, stretches forth its delicious fruit to all the faithful without reserve, for *his flesh is for the life of the world.* Well then may the pious communicant, enraptured with the contemplation of these mysteries, exclaim with the apostle, *And I saw the holy city, the new Jerusalem coming down out of heaven, from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.* (Apoc. xxi. 2.) Well might the Psalmist also cry out, *How lovely are thy tabernacles, O Lord of Hosts, blessed are they who dwell in thy mansions !* (Ps. lxxxiii. 2.)

My Friends, we are no longer captives within the confines of Egypt, separated from the land of promise by seas, deserts, and rivers—it is no longer necessary to bewail our banishment from Sion, and to mourn like the daughters of Jerusalem.—We may approach without restraint the Holy One of Judah, and sing in his presence *Hosanna to the Son of David, blessed is he that comes in the name of the Lord, Hosanna in the highest.* (Matt. xxi. 9.) He that descended from the throne of the

Eternal, to reign upon the cross, has humbled himself to become the food of man *for the life of the world.* Oh God, oh Majesty, it is in this humility that we discover thy greatness, thy power, thy love, thy infinity ! These are the evident traces of a God incarnate !—What other are so suited to raise our faith,—excite our hope, and command our charity !

As all the works of the creation proclaim the God (of the universe) concealed under these immense veils of omnipotence, though unseen by mortal eye,—as the Divinity shone in the character of Jesus Christ and manifested itself to man, though unrevealed to their senses,—so in the holy sacrament of the eucharist, we discern those sublime evidences of omnipotence, wisdom, and charity, that express the conformity existing between this tree of life, this bread of angels, this manna of the new covenant, this Christian Pasch,—and Jesus Christ the Lamb of God, that has given *his flesh for the life of the world.* Here not only

the divinity of God, but the humanity of Jesus Christ are wholly concealed, and herein he continues the *hidden God*, (Isaiah xlv. 15.) the living object of our faith, of our hope, and of our charity. Virtues by which every Christian must advance to the eternal kingdom of Jesus Christ, though of these three, charity only will hereafter exist in the beatific presence of God. Hence it is styled by St. Paul *the greater virtue**. (1 Cor. xiii. 13.)

But, my Brethren, if the charity of man will naturally expand in the presence of God, when the divine perfections are fully revealed to him,—and if *faith* will then have resolved itself into *knowledge*, and *hope* into *fruition*,—judge of that excess of divine generosity which induces Jesus Christ to impart to us graces and benedictions, at present, surpassing the powers of conception. We know how to esteem

* *Charity*, in the language of the scripture, means divine love—by the Protestants it is usually confounded with the moral virtue of *benevolence*.

generosity in this life in our transactions with each other:—let us then never forget the unreserved bounty of him who has given *his flesh for the life of the world*. Appropriately did the apostle observe, *The eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man what things God hath prepared for them that love him.* (1 Cor. ii. 9.)

But, my Brethren, covered as the eucharist is by this shade of obscurity, it nevertheless presents evidences of splendor and glory, which, like the humanity combined with the divinity of Jesus Christ, form a striking contrast. Notwithstanding it only presents to our senses the elements of matter, every thing in the Church announces it to be the DIVINE EUCHARIST. “For this,” says a sublime author*, “the illustrious orders of the hierarchy have been instituted—for this, the sacred offices of the Church are celebrated—for this, her

* Berthier.

sacred temples are built—for this, the faithful assemble. It is to obtain the privilege of participating in this, that we are regenerated by baptism, purified by penance, instructed by pastors, prepared by fastings, and reconciled to our neighbour by the pardon of injuries. It is before this, that monarchs deposit their crowns,—that Pontiffs prostrate themselves,—that the spouse vows her fidelity,—that virgins renounce the world,—that the dying implore the graces of heaven. It is this, that triumphs over heresy,—that distinguishes the true Christian from the champion of idolatry and impiety,—from the innovator and the profane man. It forms the great treasure of the Church,—the rampart of her faith,—the bond of communion of the saints, and the pledge of eternal life. O God, infinite in all thy counsels!—it is only thou, that art so hidden and so glorious,—so enveloped in darkness, and so splendidly luminous. Thy sacrament has united these two extremes; whilst thou

appearest not, thou actest every where ; and though thou art here centered as it were in a point, thou fillest the whole earth. Thou seemest to hide thyself from our sight, and we meet thee in every part of the world." *Thy flesh is for the life of the world.*

My Friends, if you will only take up the book of Psalms, and address them to Jesus Christ in the holy eucharist, you will soon perceive how perfectly applicable every line and sentence is to that mystery of incarnate love. The glowing touches of gratitude and affection which so strikingly characterize the works of the Royal Prophet,—the traits of humility and contradiction on which he so feelingly dwells,—the attributes of the divinity to which he so continually alludes,—enable the Christian to make the eucharist the hallowed subject of almost every versicle. Let us then venerate this mystery as the august object of the veneration and devotion of the whole Christian church throughout the world ;

and let us sing to it those canticles of joy and jubilation, which most properly express our faith, our gratitude, and our love to him, who has given *his flesh for the life of the world.*

An esteemed writer, whose poetic touches enliven every subject he has treated, in most pleasing colours describes the religious act of first communion in the Catholic Church. "It is," he says, "at the age of twelve, and in the spring of the year, that youth is united to the Creator. After bewailing the death of the world's Redeemer on the Hills of Sion, (alluding to the mysteries of holy-week) and recalling the darkness that covered the face of the earth, religion throws off her mantle of mourning, makes her bells resume their cheerful office, —unveils the images of her saints, and makes her cry of joy, the ancient *alleluia* of Abraham and Jacob, resound through every dome. Girls robed in white, and boys decked with the early shoots of spring, tread in procession those walks which are

enamelled with the first flowers of the year; they approach the temple of God singing their new-made hymns; the parents follow them, and soon the Christ descends upon the altar for these tender infants. The bread of angels is then laid upon tongues, that falsehood has never defiled;—and the priest of the Most High drinks, in the wine of the grape, the meritorious blood of the Lamb. In this solemn act, God recalls to us a bloody sacrifice under the most peaceful emblems, and these profound mysteries are connected with objects the most pleasing and agreeable. Nature seems to resuscitate with its Creator,—and the spring to open to youth the gates of new life, as the angel once rolled away the stone from the radiant sepulchre. The age of these tender communicants, and the season of spring bear reference to each other. The *bread* and the *wine*, declare the gifts of the earth ready to ripen, and recall to us the scenes of agricultural life; whilst God descends into these infants to enrich them

with his grace, as the dews of heaven descend at this season into the bosom of the earth, to enable her to bring forth her flowers and her riches*.”

What spectacle, my Brethren, can be more delightful to angels, or more worthy of God, and man, than the paschal table of communion, at which the whole church partakes of the *body* and *blood* of her Lord ! Recollect the pains she employs in preparing her children for this spiritual banquet,—consider the course of virtuous actions in which she is accustomed to exercise them, as well as the confessions and restitutions she exacts from them,—and admire the sublime morality this sacred rite necessarily inculcates. The very idea of man communicating with his God, is sufficient, as an enemy† of the gospel observes, to make the individual averse not only to actual sin, but to the very thought of guilt.

If such be the effect which communion

* *Genie du Christianisme.*

† Voltaire.

produces in the individual, judge then, my Brethren, how generally it will be felt by the community, when regarded as an essential duty. Let the wisest laws and regulations be formed for the conduct of men,—let the most perfect moral precepts be laid down as a rule of life, they will be absolutely weak and defective, when compared with this divine institution, in which sanctity will hold no connection with sin,—life with death,—nor grace with infidelity. Purity must absolutely qualify us to approach worthily, and where it is forfeited it must be recovered by penance. Let philosophy then resign her prejudices, and own the wisdom of an institution in which enemies are reconciled,—adulterers made chaste,—profligates are reclaimed,—and the unjust rendered honest and faithful.—If we may judge of laws by their operations, and of causes by their effects, surely philosophy can boast of nothing like this;—surely she cannot present us any thing, even in idea, that equally exhibits the af-

fectionate condescension of God,—the dependance and humility of the creature,—the sovereignty of the Supreme Being,—and the destinies of man. Here nature is united with grace, infirmity with strength, matter with spirit, mortality with eternity, man with God. Herein is re-established all we forfeited in Paradise; we resume the original communications our parents enjoyed with the Creator, we are made one flesh with him, we call him *Father*, and he treats us as his *children*.

Such, my Friends, is the happy consequence of that act, by which Jesus has given *his flesh for the life of the world*. “The Saviour,” writes the Council of Trent*, “being about to depart from this world to go to the Father, instituted this sacrament, in which he has poured out as it were the riches of his love for men, making a remembrance of his wonderful works; and in receiving it he has commanded us to commemorate him, and to

* Sess. 13. c. 2.

announce his death until he come to judge the world. He appointed moreover that this sacrament should be taken as the spiritual food of souls, by which they are nourished and strengthened, living by the life of him, who said, *he that eateth me, the same shall live for me*: and also as an antidote, by which we may be freed from our daily faults, and preserved from mortal sins. He moreover ordained it to be a pledge of our future glory, and eternal happiness; and a symbol of that one body, of which he exists the head, and to which as members he designed us to be united by the most intimate bond of faith, hope and charity, in order that all might speak the same thing, and there might be no schism in us."

I will now conclude this discourse with an exhortation to frequent communion on the authority of the immortal Fenelon. "The Fathers inform us," he writes, "that the Eucharist is the *daily bread*, which we pray for in the Lord's Prayer. Jesus Christ

gives himself under the appearance of bread, which is the most common food of man, in order to familiarize us, with his resuscitated, and glorious body. Thus the institution of this sacrament explained by tradition, holds out an invitation to daily communion.”—

“In the beginning, the practice of the faithful was conformable to the institution of the sacrament. *The first Christians were persevering in the doctrine of the apostles, and in the communication of the breaking of bread,—those who believed, were together,—and continued daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house.*” (Acts ii.)

“Tradition informs us that this communion of the breaking of bread, was the participation of the Eucharist; hence it follows, that the faithful who lived Christian lives, were all regularly nourished each day with this sacred bread, sometimes in one house, and sometimes in another. St. Paul confirms this truth, saying,

when you come together into one place, it is not now to eat the Lord's Supper. We thus observe, that the assembly was held for the supper, and that the apostle in reproaching the Corinthians that the *Lord's Supper* was no longer to be recognized in the midst of the indecencies which occurred, indicates that something was wanting to the meeting, through each one partaking indecently of *the Supper*. For according to the institution as explained by the apostle, they assembled to eat the *Lord's Supper*. These two things were combined."

"St. Justin the Martyr, who was almost cotemporary with the apostles, writes; *After he that presides has performed the act of thanksgiving, * and all the people have joined with him in prayer to confirm what has been done, those who are called by us deacons and ministers, distribute to each one present, the bread, and the wine, and the water, which have served as matter for the act*

* The Consecration.

of thanksgiving, in order that each may participate of it.—This distribution and communication of the things which have served as matter for the act of thanksgiving, is made to each one of the persons present, and afterwards the same are sent by the deacons to those who are absent.”—

“This discipline of antiquity is confirmed by the authority of the Council of Trent. The Church instructs us, that none of the faithful, who are guilty of mortal sins shall communicate until they have confessed, however contrite they may be. By which we are to remark, that such only are excluded from communion as are guilty of mortal sin.”—

“The Council adds, that Christians ought to believe and reverence this sacrament with a faith so firm, and with that fervour and piety, that may allow them frequently to receive this bread that is above all substance, in order that it may truly be the life of their souls, and the perpetual health of their minds, and that the strength

they derive from it, may enable them to pass from the dangers of this pilgrimage, to the repose of our heavenly country.—The holy Council is desirous that the faithful assisting at each Mass should communicate not only in spirit and affection, but also by sacramentally receiving the Eucharist, in order that they may more abundantly benefit by this sacrifice.”

“Behold then,” continues Fenelon, “the Church always one and the same; no ways impaired by time, in her original purity she always subsists. The same spirit that animated her in the days of St. Justin, and of the other Fathers, directs her in these latter times. She exhorts all her children to frequent communion, and is desirous that they never assist at any Mass, without participating of the eucharist. In reality the eucharist having been instituted to replace the sacrifices which were called pacific, in which the victim was offered and eaten by the assistants, a species of outrage to the sacrifice of Jesus Christ is com-

mitted, when we unite with the priest in the oblation, without joining him in the communion. The only difficulty or apprehension expressed by the council, is when conscience is reproached with mortal sin."

"It is idle to object to us, that persons often approach to communion who are very unworthy. We answer with St. Austin, *Some are corrected like Peter, others are endured like Judas.* Omitting the latter, we here speak of souls that are pure, humble, docile and recollected, who observing their own imperfections, are desirous of correcting them by this heavenly nourishment. Why should any be scandalized, at seeing these frequently communicate? They are imperfect, it is said;—but is it not to become perfect that they communicate? Does not St. Ambrose say, that *sin is our malady, and that our cure is in that heavenly and venerable sacrament?* An apostle acknowledges that *in many things we all offend.*" (James iii. 2.)

“We ought not to be surprised therefore at the faithful committing venial sins, notwithstanding their endeavours to correct them, and yet daily communicating with benefit: we should not be so disturbed about their imperfections, by which God exercises their humility, as to forget those great and more dangerous offences, from which they are secured by this *daily preservative*. Besides, we remark that the Christians of the first ages, who communicated every day, were guilty of great imperfections. Are we to condemn their daily communions, and correct the primitive Church, that authorized their communions, with a knowledge of these great imperfections? Moreover we do not observe that these primitive Christians regularly confessed their daily faults; whereas the devout of our times, often mention them in confession, in order to purify themselves before communion. In fine, the Christians of antiquity communicated in their houses, and from their own hands during the periods of persecution

rather than not communicate every day. These latter times are not less hazardous. Persecution is in proportion more dangerous, when it is disguised under an appearance of peace, and when the tempter seduces us by the venom of pride and luxury. Refined impiety, deluding flattery, and the contagion of hypocrisy, are more to be feared than swords and tortures. Never was this daily remedy so necessary as at present."

"Do not therefore fear the arguments derived from the discipline of the ancient Church, nor prevent those from delivering their sentiments, who disapprove of the devotions of our times, and are determined to abide by the first ages, which you have seen in unison with the Council of Trent. This council ought to suffice for a rule, since the Church is always the same, as we are assured by the divine promises. But even antiquity has been instanced for your satisfaction. Communicate therefore as the apostles made the first Christians

communicate, and as the Fathers have instructed the faithful to communicate in the succeeding ages. Freely permitting those to talk who are desirous of reforming all things, do you eat your *daily bread*, in order, that living by Jesus Christ, you may live for him. Suffer not yourselves to be ruled by these reformers, so forward to take scandal, and to criticise every thing; but rather be directed by your pastors, and by a prudent and experienced director, who will guide you in the spirit of the Church *." Thus, my Brethren, you will be conducted to eternal happiness and glory, which is the blessing I wish you.

* Lettre sur la Communion.



SERMON XXXV.

ON TRANSUBSTANTIATION* IN THE SACRAMENT OF THE EUCHARIST.

Unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you shall not have life in you.—For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed. (John vi. 54, 56.)

MY Brethren, in proceeding to address you on the great mystery of the real presence of the body and blood of Jesus Christ in the holy sacrament of the altar, it will be proper to premise, for your more easy apprehension of this article of divine revelation, that by the eating of that heavenly substance, the Catholic Church does not require you to suppose man feeds thereon after a gross and carnal manner, as he does on other food.—The faith of the

* *Transubstantiation* is the change of one substance into another.

Catholic Church simply implies, that, for the act of communion, we are spiritually united to Jesus Christ,—that under those signs he enters into us, and we into him, and that this union produces the same spiritual effect in the soul, as material food on our bodies. It is not a breaking of parts, or a corporeal digestion, but the union of two spiritual substances which cannot be changed, and which to use an imperfect comparison, like water and salt become as one. *He that eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood, abideth in me and I in him.* (John vi. 57.)

This, I confess, is truly a great and sublime mystery : nevertheless, though it demands the return of a strong faith on the part of man, is it more sublime, or does it call for a stronger exertion of faith, than the mystery of the incarnation of the eternal God ? Too excessive, you will perhaps reply, would be such an act of the Redeemer's condescension and love ! What then does it exceed that generosity

which, in his passion, poured forth his blood for you at every vein, and induced him to expire on the cross? Or is not the *one* act, only the counterpart of the *other*?

In discussing this mystery of faith with our Protestant Brethren, it will not be necessary to call this day to my assistance the decisive authority of the Church, and the universal consent of nations and ages, until later times.—I will meet my adversaries on their own ground, the authority of sacred scripture;—trusting they will allow this to be fair, on my part, since I agree to mete with their own measure, and to decide by the rule of their own choice.—I may surely also presume, that having appealed to Scripture, they will not again appeal from the text,—but rather abide by the verdict of the letter. Otherwise, vain will it be for us to contend with disputants whose conclusive argument should be, in the language of the incredulous apostle, *Except I shall see in his hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the place*

of the nails, and put my hand into his side,
 I WILL NOT BELIEVE. (John xx. 25.)

Now, in order to conduct your understandings, by the means of Scripture, to this mystery of faith, I think it best exactly to follow the course adopted by our blessed Saviour,—and to trace out to you the whole history of his proceeding, as it is distinctly recorded in the sixth chapter of St. John.

The Evangelist opens the chapter by informing us, that after the miraculous cure of the cripple at Bethsaida, *a great multitude followed Jesus; and he went up into a mountain and there sat with his disciples.* Then in a very singular and abrupt manner, as if in a parenthesis, he introduces a piece of information, which seems to have no connection with the story he is relating—Now, says he, *the Pasch, the festival day of the Jews was near at hand;*—and immediately proceeds to say, *when Jesus, therefore, had lifted up his eyes, and seen that a great multitude cometh to him, he said to Philip;*

whence shall we buy bread that these may eat? And this he said to try him, for he knew himself what he would do.

Now, my Brethren, it is evident from the manner in which this clause is inserted, that the action our divine Saviour was going to perform, had a reference to the *Pasch*, and that in all probability he had been discoursing with his disciples on that mysterious figure. The Evangelist then informs us, that *Jesus took—five barley loaves and two fishes,—and distributed them—to the multitude,—in number about 5000; and when they were filled, his disciples gathered up and filled twelve baskets with the fragments of five barley loaves, which remained over and above to them that had eaten.*

Surely this was a strong figure of the mysterious multiplication of the bread of heaven in the *Pasch* of the new law! By this act also Jesus convinced the multitude of his omnipotence, which is the foundation of our faith. For they said, *this is of*

a truth the prophet that is to come into the world. During the following night he again gave proofs to his disciples of his almighty power, by walking on the sea and quieting the storm. *And they that were in the ship came and worshipped him, saying, of a truth thou art the Son of God.* (Matt. xiv. 33.) Indeed, the natural impression which these miracles must have made on the minds of his disciples was, that all things were possible to him.

It was under the influence of these impressions, that the divine Jesus took an occasion, on the subsequent morning, to tell the Jews, that for the spiritual nourishment of his followers, he would provide a more heavenly food, than what they had hitherto eaten;—a food that should be *bread*, and at the same time his own very *body* and *blood*.—This conversation he began with the multitude and led them on in the following manner. On their coming up to him, he said, *you seek me, not, because you have seen miracles, but because*

you did eat of the loaves and were filled. Labour not for the meat which perisheth, but for that which endureth unto everlasting life, which the Son of man will give you. For him hath God the Father sealed:— that is glorified and testified as you have witnessed. *They said therefore to him, what shall we do that we may work the works of God? Jesus answered, and said to them, this is the work of God, that you believe in him whom he hath sent. They said therefore to him, what sign then dost thou shew, that we may see, and may believe thee? What dost thou work? Our fathers did eat manna in the desert, as it is written; HE GAVE THEM BREAD FROM HEAVEN TO EAT.* That is to say, by the miracle you have already worked, you have done no more than Moses has done. *Our fathers did eat manna in the desert, as it is written; HE GAVE THEM BREAD FROM HEAVEN TO EAT.* Then Jesus said to them, *Amen, amen I say to you; Moses gave you not bread from heaven; but my Father giveth*

you the TRUE bread from heaven. The other was only in appearance bread from heaven, this is substantially so. For the bread of God is that which cometh down from heaven and giveth life to the world ; that is spiritual life or grace. Then they said to him, Lord give us always this bread. And Jesus said to them, I am the bread of life ; he that cometh to me shall not hunger ; and he that believeth in me shall never thirst ; that is there can be nothing more excellent and spiritually desirable, than the bread of heaven which I shall prepare for you. But I said to you, that you also have seen me, and you believe not. All that the Father giveth me, that is, all that grace shall make mine, shall come to me. Now to come to me is to do the will of the Father. The Jews then murmured at him, because he had said ; I am the living bread which came down from heaven. And they said, is not this the Son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know ? how then saith he I came down from heaven ?

This they said thinking him to be merely a man. *Jesus therefore answered and said to them ; murmur not among yourselves ; to receive this doctrine, you must have the grace of divine faith which can only come from God. No man can come to me, except the Father who hath sent me draw him. As God then I speak the truth—Amen, amen I say unto you, he that believeth in me hath everlasting life. I am the bread of life. Your fathers did eat manna in the desert and are dead. This is the bread which cometh down from heaven, if any man eat of this bread worthily, he shall live for ever ; and the bread that I will give, is my flesh for the life of the world. The Jews therefore strove among themselves, saying ; how can this man give us his flesh to eat ? Then Jesus said to them ; Amen, amen I say unto you ; it becomes not you to doubt,—verily, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you shall not have life in you. He that eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood abideth in me, and I in him.*

As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father, so he that eateth me, the same also shall live by me. This is the bread that came down from heaven. Not as your fathers did eat manna, and are dead. He that eateth this bread shall live for ever. These things he said teaching in the synagogue in Capharnaum.

Now St. John informs us that a division arose among the Jews on this subject; *many of his disciples hearing it said, this saying is hard, and who can hear it? But Jesus knowing in himself that his disciples murmured at this, said to them, doth this scandalize you? If then you shall see the Son of Man ascend up where he was before,—will you then believe that this is possible to me, and that my word is the word of God? Knowing my parents, as you suppose, according to the flesh, you only attend to my human nature, without reflecting that I have also the nature of God, and according to that am the Lord and Creator of the Universe. —You take my doctrine in a gross and*

carnal sense ; whereas *it is the spirit that quickeneth, the flesh profiteth nothing. The words that I have spoken to you are spirit and life ; that is, relate to a mystery wholly spiritual and sublime. But there are some of you, that believe not. For Jesus knew from the beginning who they were that did not believe. And he said, therefore did I say to you, that no man can come to me, unless it be given him by my Father. After this many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him. Then Jesus said to the twelve, will you also go away ? Will you also follow the unbelievers ? And Simon Peter answered him ; Lord, to whom shall we go ? Thou hast the words of eternal life : and we believe and have known that thou art Christ the Son of God. (John vi.)*

All this had passed but a very little before the Paschal time ; perhaps, within twelve or fourteen days. The disciples lived in eager expectation from this time, that Jesus would accomplish his promise, and daily saw their faith and hopes

strengthened by the new miracles that he performed. In their presence, HE cured the blind, the deaf, the paralytic, and raised the dead to life. When therefore the mysterious *feast of the Pasch, or of unleavened bread*, (Exod. xii. 14. 17.) was arrived, Jesus Christ fixed the attention of his apostles with these words : *With desire I have desired to eat this Pasch with you before I suffer. For I say to you, from this time I will not eat it, till it be fulfilled in the kingdom of God ; and having taken the chalice, he gave thanks and said, Take and divide it among you. For I say to you, that I will not drink of the vine, till the kingdom of God come. And taking bread, he gave thanks, and brake, and gave to them, saying, THIS IS MY BODY which is GIVEN for you, do this for a commemoration of me : In like manner the chalice also, after he had supped, saying, This is the chalice of the new testament IN MY BLOOD which SHALL BE SHED for you.* (Luke xxii. 15.) Would it, then, have become the apostles to have drawn back,

or to have hesitated as to what he distributed to them? He declared, that under the signs of *bread* and of the *cup* he gave to them his real *body* and *blood* according to his promise ; and as they had been witnesses to his other miracles, this rested on the strength of the same omnipotence.

That such was the faith also of these apostles, is evident from the explanation of the apostle St. Paul, who writes, *the chalice of benediction which we bless, is it not the communion of the BLOOD of Christ : and the bread which we break, is it not the partaking of the BODY of the Lord ?* (1 Cor. x. 16.) And in the following chapter, reprehending some abuses, which had crept in among the Corinthians in celebrating this new Pasch of the Lord, he tells them, that this mystery had been also specially revealed to him by Jesus Christ, *and that as often as they should eat this bread, and drink the chalice, they should shew the death of the Lord until he come ; and therefore, whosoever shall eat this bread or drink the*

chalice of the Lord unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord—for he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh judgment to himself, not discerning the body of the Lord. (1 Cor. xi. 27. 29.)

My Brethren, in reconsidering what you have heard from scripture this day, it evidently appears, that our divine Saviour declared, in the plainest terms, that he would nourish his disciples with his blessed *body*, and *blood*,—and that he afterwards did give to them his *body*, under the sign of *bread*, and that the *cup* which he gave to them was the chalice of his *blood*. Scripture, therefore, decisively teaches, that in the sacrament of the eucharist, or the mystery of the Lord's supper, there is truly present the real body and blood of Jesus Christ. Now, that he is made the spiritual nourishment of our souls in holy communion, is the faith of the Universal Catholic Church.—And when Protestants here object, that the words of scripture are not to be taken

in their literal, but a figurative sense, and that Jesus Christ saying, *this is my body*, means, this is the figure of my body, they betray a duplicity, of which they have reason to be ashamed. If they have appealed from the authority of the Church to scripture, why do they not abide by scripture? why do they appeal to their own fancies? For where is it written, that these passages are to be understood in a figurative sense? Have they a single text to produce, from one end of scripture to the other, in support of such an opinion, to which every letter is opposed? I call upon them to shew where it is written, unless they mean to pass for those who mutilate the word of God.

Some will answer, did not Jesus Christ also say that he was a *door*, and a *vine*? Yes, my Friends, he is truly a door and a vine. Since we all must enter into heaven through him, and all draw *spiritual* life and grace from him, (as branches vegetate from the parent stock)—these are obvious-

ly in themselves figurative expressions, and can only be taken in a figurative sense. But to shew the disparity, let me ask—did Jesus Christ ever swear that he was a *real door* and a *real vine*? Did he ever tell his disciples, that *unless they believed this of him, they should not have life in them*? Did he repeat the same declaration in different ways, all expressing that he was a *real door* and a *real vine*? Did he holding a door or a vine ever say, *This is a part of my self? my flesh, my blood to be shed for you*? Did he work a miracle calculated to make them more easily conceive and believe what he asserted? Did many of his disciples abandon him because they would not believe it? Did he turn to the twelve and demand a confession of faith from them? Did Peter, in the name of the rest, make a solemn declaration on the occasion, *that they believed him to be the Son of God, and that he had the words of eternal life*? Did he not on the contrary, himself explain those expressions in a figurative sense? Do not

then, my Friends, confound expressions, that are exclusively figurative, with others that are evidently literal. For unless the words of scripture refer to a *true* and *real* manducation of the body and blood of Jesus Christ, I deny that they can be true in any sense whatever, nor is there a circumstance or fact, no not even a single incident in the whole history and life of our blessed Saviour, that can make them expressions proper for him to use ; they would prove him to be absolutely ignorant of the force of language.

But you reply—How can it be ? How is it possible, that under a morsel of bread, Jesus Christ can exist wholly and entirely, and be thus received by Christians without his suffering either pain or hurt ?

My Friends, into such enquiries I beg leave to decline following you. The scripture is a sufficient authority for a reasonable man ; and I did conceive you to be aware that we were discussing a mystery. To talk about what is impossible to

an omnipotent God, at once convinces us that you take not reason for your guide, and therefore you may wade through darkness by yourselves ; while I address myself to those who have eyes to see, and ears to hear,' and senses to understand.* For *Blessed are they who hear the word of God and keep it.* (Luke xi. 28.)

My Brethren, when in the sacrifice of the mass we celebrate the mystery of the *last supper* of Jesus Christ, the consecrated priest of God acts, not in the capacity of a mere human agent, but exercises the divine power lodged in him, of working this mysterious change in the substances of *bread* and *wine*, and of producing under their species, that very *body* of Jesus Christ which the angels adore. At the moment, he fulfils the word that was spoken by our

* The chymical laboratory presents to us many operations of nature truly amazing:—three bodies—two of which are permanent gases, and the other volatile, will form a substance neither fusible nor volatile at a white heat—in fact more intractable than flint.

blessed Saviour,—the omnipotence of God operates by his minister, and there is instantaneously and *substantially* present, in the whole, and in every particle of the sacramental elements, that glorified body of Jesus Christ, which therein subsists as long as the accidents of bread and wine endure. Which mode of being present to us, by the Council of Trent* is styled *sacramental*; *being contained really, truly, and substantially under the species of those sensible things*, though not apparently to our senses. “Neither,” continues the Council, “is there any contradiction in our Saviour’s being always seated at the right hand of the Father in heaven according to his natural manner of existing, and his substance being *sacramentally* present to us in many other places notwithstanding, after that manner of existing, which, though we can scarce explain it in words, we can nevertheless assent to, as possible to God,

* Sess. 13. c. 1. “*On the real presence of our Lord Jesus Christ in the sacrament of the eucharist.*”

and our minds being enlightened by faith, we ought constantly to believe *.

* As a Chinese missionary was once passing through London on his return to Italy, he was hospitably entertained by Bishop Burnet, extremely curious to learn the mode adopted by the Catholic priesthood in instructing the Chinese converts in the Christian faith. As the missionary was quietly giving an account of the method which the Catholic clergy pursued, he was suddenly interrupted by the Bishop's chaplain, who was impatient to know how they could make the converts admit so knotty a point as transubstantiation. "Aye, Sir," he cried out, "all this is very well; but how do you make them believe *transubstantiation*?" "Fair and softly," said the missionary, "we don't go on so fast; we begin with the first chapter of the Bible; tell them how God created the world, how he made man out of the dust, how he took a rib out of his side, and made a woman of it, and when they thoroughly believe this, we then propose *transubstantiation* to their belief."—See *Nichol's Literary Anecdotes of the 18th Century. Art. Burnet.*

The same object may exist in several ways; and if it be permitted to explain what is most sacred, by what is most simple and familiar to us, I conceive that I can throw some light on the nature of the real presence of Jesus Christ in the sacrament of the eucharist, by instancing a comparison in nature which in some measure will explain his different modes of existence; in all of which he is *substantially* the same Christ.

In nature the bird lives and exists in the egg during a

This change of substance of the bread,
my Brethren, under the same accidents,

considerable period of time. If immediately before that term, which nature has marked for its breathing the air of life, we place the egg in the hand, we there hold the bird, though none of our senses are able to distinguish it—and though only the egg be visible, it is the bird that is *substantially* present. After this period the bird issues into *visible* life, and continues in a growing state of existence, till it enter into its *last* state at the age of maturity. Now in all these three states, the bird, though differing as to some accidental circumstances, is essentially and *substantially* the same. In like manner, the humanity of Jesus Christ presents us three forms of existence, distinguished by the Council of Trent. (Sess. 13.)—1st. His existence in glory at the right hand of the Father. 2d. His natural existence on earth before his passion. 3d. His sacramental existence in the eucharist. In all these forms of existence it is *substantially* the same Christ that is present, though under different circumstances. In explaining this point in the EXPOSITION OF LITURGY, p. 217, I have therefore laid great stress upon the word *substantially*, and given the following elucidation of it. “The word *substantially* is deserving of great attention, and will help to remove many difficulties from such as can distinguish between substance and accident. For, by it we do not say that Christ is in the sacrament as in a place having reference to size and quantity, with all the other accidents of a *material* body, but as he is a substance; neither do we say, that the sub-

which in theological language of the schools we call transubstantiation, is completely

stance of the bread and wine is changed into the magnitude and quantity of Christ, but into the substance of Christ."

Now although the understanding be unequal to comprehend how the body of Christ should have two forms of existence at the same time, one in glory, the other sacramental,—it may undoubtedly by faith assent to the mystery, founded on the word of God. It is also to be observed, that even Protestants, if we attend to the language of their ideas, seem strongly inclined to admit this doctrine of the Catholic Church, on the *real* and *substantial* presence of Jesus Christ in the sacrament of the eucharist. The Protestant catechism of the Church of England contains the following questions and answers. *Q.* What is the outward part or sign of the Lord's Supper? *A.* Bread and wine, which the Lord hath commanded to be received. *Q.* What is the inward part or thing signified? *A.* The body and blood of Christ, which are *verily* and *indeed* taken and received by the faithful in the Lord's Supper. *Q.* What are the benefits whereof we are partakers thereby? *A.* The strengthening and refreshing of our souls by the body and blood of Christ, as our bodies are by the bread and wine."

In Dr. Watts's Hymns moreover, which are a species of public prayer used in the chapels of the Dissenters and Methodists, we observe many turns of thought and expression, which decidedly support the Catholic sense, viz.

the work of God ;—the minister acts no otherwise than as the humble instrument,

“ For food he gives his flesh ;
He bids us drink his blood ;
Amazing favour ! matchless grace
Of our descending God ! ”

“ This holy bread and wine
Maintains our fainting breath,
By union with our living Lord,
And interest in his death.”—*Hymn 2.*

“ Let us adore th’ eternal Word,
’Tis he our souls hath fed :
Thou art our living stream, O Lord,
And thou th’ immortal bread.”

“ Bless’d be the Lord that gives his flesh
To nourish dying men ;
And often spreads his table fresh,
Lest we should faint again.”—*Hymn 5.*

“ This soul-reviving wine,
Dear Saviour, ’tis thy blood ;
We thank that sacred flesh of thine,
For this immortal food.”

“ The banquet that we eat
Is made of heavenly things !
Earth hath no dainties half so sweet
As our Redeemer brings.”

which his omnipotence has chosen to employ. And were I allowed to instruct you on questions of philosophy, much might be said to diminish the difficulty you feel in admitting this stupendous miracle. It will not however be irrelevant to direct your attention to a few points, which may convince you that, even in the physical world, there are things in some degree analogous to it.

It is an undoubted fact for instance, that even in nature one substance is frequently changed into another; and it is well known that objects often appear to us under an appearance different from their real form; and that they often seem to

“ In vain had Adam sought,
And stretched his garden round,
For there was no such blessed fruit
In all the happy ground.”

“ Th’ angelic host above
Can never taste this food!
They feast upon their Maker’s,
But not a Saviour’s blood.”—*Hymn 7.*

exist where we prove they do not, which is the case with all objects we look at through the medium of water. We observe the juices of a plant converted into the hardest wood;—we see the grass of the field changed into the horns, bones, hair and flesh of animals;—we behold wood and other substances converted into stone by petrefaction;—we observe the same grain of seed multiply to infinity;—walls of brass are not impenetrable to the forked lightning, and through the chrystal, which appears a solid body, the light passes in every direction, as if it met with no resistance.—The whole hemisphere of the heavens, with all its varieties, is regularly depicted upon the small pupil of the eye, where millions of rays cross each other without interruption. The sun, moon, and stars, are immense bodies, yet they all find a place in that wonderful organ. Nay philosophers have declared, that the whole expanse of matter, may be compressed within a less space than a cubic inch. Again, let ten

thousand look at one man, does *he* cease to be present to you, who is equally present to all? Here is, therefore, a multiplication of appearances, though the object continue one, which may be considered a lively, although imperfect illustration of the ubiquity of the presence of Jesus Christ in this sacrament of the altar.

These wonders, my Brethren, may astonish you, yet you believe them—and can you say, it is more wonderful, that we should taste and feel bread and wine, when we receive the substance of the body and blood of Christ?—My Brethren, when we say that we can see an object,—feel a substance,—or that we taste a thing,—we only affirm, that at that moment there is that impression upon the soul. It is only by continual observation and experience however, that we learn to understand these expressions of the senses, and refer them to their proper objects*. The language of

* Dr. Poeterfield, quoted by Dougald Stewart in his *Elements of the Philosophy of the Human Mind*, says in his

the senses is the first that the soul of man has to study. Destroy those faculties, and every object will cease to exist in his regard. Change the operation of one of those faculties, in any single instance for example, and the object will appear changed

Treatise on the Eye, "I know not, but this I am very certain of, that nothing can act, or be acted upon, where it is not; and therefore our mind can never perceive any thing but its own proper modifications, and the various states of the sensorium, to which it is present: so that it is not the external sun and moon, which are in the heavens, which our mind perceives, but only their *image* or *representation*, impressed upon the sensorium. How the soul of a seeing man sees these images, or how it receives those ideas, from such agitations in the sensorium, I know not; but I am sure it can never perceive the external bodies themselves, to which it is not present."—"The slightest philosophy," says Mr. Hume, "teaches us, that nothing can ever be present to the mind, but an *image*, or *perception*, and that these senses are only the inlets, through which these images are conveyed; without being able to produce any immediate intercourse between the mind and the object. The table, which we see, seems to diminish as we remove farther from it: but the real table, which exists independent of us, suffers no alteration? It was therefore nothing but its image which was present to the mind. These are the obvious dictates of reason."

to us, though unaltered in itself. Change the substance of the object, as in the instance of the eucharist, leaving its operation on the senses, the same as before, and what had been bread and wine, will still appear to us bread and wine, through all their respective relations, though they are *essentially* become and exist a different object. Much of what I have said, is exemplified in those, who have been deprived of one or more of their faculties; or who attend to the impression of one sense only. And in the same manner we are able to explain the sensible apparition of angels and spirits, by the impressions which the soul has taken.

Remember therefore, that in the holy eucharist, the change is not in the blessed body of Jesus Christ, which always exists, as he rose illustrious from the dead, and ascended glorious into heaven—the error is to be attributed to those senses, which prevented from discerning his glorious and spiritualized body, would discover nothing at

all, if he did not make himself sensible to us, under some material sign. For you must observe that it was only, when he chose to work a miracle, on these senses, that the apostles and others, could see him, with their material eyes, after his resurrection. Thus Magdalen mistook him for a gardener.—Thus as the disciples passed to Emaus, in his company, the scripture tells us, *their eyes were held that they should not know him*,—and that afterwards *at supper, their eyes were opened and they knew him, and he vanished out of their sight.* (Luke xxiv. 16. 31.)

Again, as the apostles were assembled together in a room at Jerusalem, St. John informs us, *that Jesus came the doors being shut and stood in the midst of them, and said peace be to you.* (John xxii. 26.) Now if the spiritualized body of Jesus could pass entire into a room with closed doors, why not believe that we also embrace the spiritualized body of Jesus Christ in holy communion? Are we as Christians

and disciples less dear to him than the apostles? Remember the rebuke which Jesus Christ passed on the incredulity of St. Thomas, *because thou hast seen me Thomas, thou hast believed, blessed are they that have not seen, and have believed.* (John xx. 29.) It is always through not distinguishing between the mortal and the glorified,—the passible and impassible body of Jesus Christ, or between his *sacramental* and his *natural* presence, that men experience difficulties in assenting to this great mystery of faith.

In conclusion then, Oh divine Jesus! whose wisdom and power appear in this holy mystery of love and grace, as in thy blessed incarnation, we adore this excess of thy benignity, and under the sacramental veil of matter, we confess the continual presence of thee our Saviour and our God. Sensible of our own infirmities, and relying on the truth of thy word, we refuse not to sacrifice to faith the evidence of our senses. In the shade of thy obscurity, we worship

thy Majesty,—in thy annihilation, we count thy eternal years,—and where we perceive thee not,—we embrace thee with the dearest affections of our souls. Perfect then, Oh Lord ! in us this work of divine grace ; and strengthen our faith against the pride of human nature, that our understandings, becoming obedient to thy revealed word, we may merit a constant encrease of those spiritual blessings which are prepared for us in this sacrament, and thus be brought to that crown of everlasting happiness and glory, which thou hast promised to those who worthily receive it. Thou hast said, *He that eateth this bread shall live for ever.* (John vi. 59.)



SERMON XXXVI.

ON THE PROTESTANT EXPLANATION
OF THE SACRAMENT OF THE EU-
CHARIST.

*The Jews therefore strove among themselves, saying, how can this man give us his flesh to eat. * (John vi. 53.)*

THE real presence of the body and blood of Jesus Christ in the sacrament of the altar, formed a point of doctrine uncontroverted by Christians during the first thousand years

* As Protestants are always appealing to the doctrine of the first ages of the Christian Church, and profess to consider that period, which reached to the first Council of Nice, indubitably orthodox, it becomes a matter of high importance for Catholics, to sustain the faith of the Church by passages and quotations from the works of fathers, who flourished previously to that epoch. I shall now therefore quote from the writings of a father who assisted at that very council, St. James of Nisiba, whose works are very little known, have been scarcely ever copied on that account, yet are extremely worthy the attention of Protest-

of the Church of Christ, nor was it till the eleventh century, that a vain disappointed

ants. They exist in the great libraries of the Continent, and during a visit to Paris, I made the following extracts from them, shewing how invariable has been the faith and doctrine of the Catholic Church, from the period of the first Council of Nice to the present time. A similar quotation from the same father in proof of our doctrine on confession will be given in a note attached to the second sermon on penance. The work to which I refer is entitled ; " Sⁱ Patris nostri Jacobi Episcopi Nisibeni Sermones cum præfatione, notis, et disertatione de asietis. Quæ omnia nunc primum in lucem prodeunt.—Romæ MDCCLVI.—Typis sacræ congregationis de propagandâ fide.—Extract of Sermon the 14th.

" *The Jews* on the paschal day, were freed from the slavery of Pharaoh ; and we on the day of our Lord's crucifixion are freed from the captivity and slavery of Satan.—The Jews immolated a lamb taken from a flock of sheep, and by its blood were saved from the exterminating angel : and we by the blood of a beloved Son are saved from the works of corruption, which we had wrought.—They had Moses for a saviour ; we have Jesus for our Saviour and leader. Moses divided the sea and passed along ; our Saviour divided hell and broke down its gates (of death) and entering in he opened them, and made safe the way for all the faithful.—To them (the Israelites) manna was given for food ; to us our Lord has given his flesh to eat. For them he drew water from the rock ; and for us our Saviour

priest in the person of Berengarius, conceived the impious design of seeking fame

will cause the water of life to flow from his side. To those he promised the land of Canaan as an inheritance; and to us he has promised to give the land of life. For them Moses hung up a brazen serpent, that whoever should only look upon it might live, and be safe from the bite of serpents; but for us our Lord Jesus himself hung on a cross, and through him we are saved from the gripe of Satan. Moses erected a tabernacle of the testament, and taught vows, and delivered to the people sacrifices, for the expiation of their sins; and Jesus erected the tabernacle of David, and secured it. Now then, most dearly beloved, attend and reflect on the Paschal Lamb; how the Lord commanded them to eat it, in one house, and not in many houses; that is in the house of the one Church of God. And moreover he says; *let not a stranger eat of it, nor foreigner, nor hireling.* And who are these? They are our desires and bad thoughts, which deprive us of the power of eating the Pasch. For our Saviour said of the mercenary, that the mercenary who is not the master of the sheep, leaves and abandons the flock and flies, when he sees the wolf coming.—Besides the Lord commanded them not to eat *of any thing raw, or boiled in water, but only roasted before the fire.* (Exod. xii. 45.)

“This also is most fit and proper; because that sacrifice which is offered in the Church of God, is prepared with fire; neither is it boiled in water, nor is it offered on the altar in a raw state.—Moreover he shews in what manner

and reputation by denying this mystery of universal tradition. He lived however to abjure in the bitterness of repentance his multiplied prevarications, and confessed the true and ancient faith of the Catholic Church in his last moments. Small, indeed was the number of his adherents, yet his errors revived in the followers of Wickliff and Huss, who spreading themselves

they eat it: Girding, he says, *their loins, having shoes on their feet and a staff in their hands.* (Exod. xii. 11.) In which are included many mysteries. For he that eats of Christ the true Lamb, girds his loins with faith, clothes his feet with the courage of the gospel, and holds in his hand the sword of the spirit, which is the very word of God.—He moreover commanded *that a bone of him should not be broken.* (Exod. xii. 46.) This was fulfilled on the cross, when they abstained from breaking his limbs.—He added after these things, that *the purchased servant having circumcised himself should eat of the Pasch.* The purchased servant, is the sinner, who doing penance, is purchased with the blood of Christ, and circumcising his heart of its bad works, approaches to the laver of baptism, the perfection and completion of true circumcision, and comes and is made partaker of the mysteries of God, and communicates of the body and blood of Christ. This is preserved in the Church of God."

through England and Germany, under the name of Lollards and Anabaptists, became the seeds from whence sprang the numerous sects of reformists in the 16th century.

To enumerate the various, the multifarious and contradictory opinions which these several sects professed on the subject before us, the Sacrament of the Eucharist in the *Lord's Supper*,* would be as impossible, as needless, in this place;—they stand already described by the great Bossuet in his immortal work on the variations of the Protestant Church. Whilst however we observe these Sectaries like barks, *tost to and fro by every wind of doctrine*,—and see them drifting across each other in transverse directions, to the Christian it forms a spectacle of triumph, to behold the great *ark of the covenant*, the CATHOLIC Ro-

* Opposition to the Eucharist, seems principally to originate in the corruption of the heart.—Its strenuous opposers have almost universally been libertines. Men naturally oppose what condemns them.

MAN AND APOSTOLIC CHURCH, preserving amidst them her steady course, and like a fair and stately ship, unmoved by the storm, passing down the lapse of eighteen ages. I feel no inclination to tire you, my Friends, with the unnecessary review of any opinions which distinguish these sects.—But having entered the list of controversy with the Established Church of England, it may be expected that I clearly state the objections, which conscientiously oblige us to oppose her doctrine on this article of sacramental communion in the *Lord's Supper*.

The faith of the Protestant Church is supposed to be laid down in the 28th Canon or Article of Religion, as given in the Common Prayer Book, to which I think as Catholics we may lawfully object for three reasons, which if founded on truth, as I think I can shew them to be, Protestants themselves will admit to be conclusive.—1st, Then, we object to the doctrine of the Established Church, because

it is contrary to Scripture, 2dly, because it is in opposition to the authoritative decisions of the Universal Church, and 3dly, because it is in contradiction with itself.

If the attempt to give the sense of a contradictory proposition, be not an evident proof of folly, the doctrine supposed to be laid down in this article of religion, is, that the body and blood of Jesus Christ are only received and eaten in the *Lord's Supper*, after a spiritual manner by faith; which implies that they are not received *really, verily, and substantially*. A doctrine however decisively in opposition to the plainest declarations of Scripture: *I am the living bread*, said Jesus Christ, *which came down from heaven*. (John vi. 51.) Now can it then be ordinarily affirmed of bread that it containeth *life*? To say that it is the support of life, is a common expression; but to say that it is the principle of life, is to allow it a property distinguishing it from bread. This is rendered still more evident by the following pas-

sages. *If any man, continues Jesus Christ, eat of this bread, he shall live for ever, and the bread that I will give is my flesh for the life of the world. For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed. Nay, amen, amen I say to you, except you eat the flesh of the Son of Man, and drink his blood, you shall not have life in you. (John vi. 52. 54. 56.) And at his last Supper, when he took bread and blessed, he said, take ye and eat, this is my body. And likewise taking the chalice, he said, drink ye all of this, for this is my blood of the New Testament, which shall be shed for many unto the remission of sins. (Matt. xxvi. 26, 27, 28.)*

Therefore it is evident, that these words clearly support each other in the literal, and natural interpretation;—I mean, in that of the real presence of the body and blood of Jesus Christ in the Sacrament of the Eucharist: and that those persons formally give the lie to these words of Jesus Christ, who affirm that his *flesh* and *blood* are not there *truly* present, nor *verily* and

substantially eaten and received by those who communicate. In direct contradiction to his declaration *this is my body which is given for you*, (Luke xxii. 19.) such doctrine says, *this is not your body, which is given for us*;—it is the figure,—it is the sign,—it is bread,—it is any thing in short, but what you have affirmed it to be. But is not this the language of resistance and incredulity? Is it not the condemnation of the doctrine of Jesus Christ?

I know it will be said, in reply, that Jesus Christ did not intend his words to be taken in their literal and natural sense;—but that he meant something else than what they strictly import.—In answer however, we may surely expect, that the Reformer will produce an authority from scripture as decisively against the literal sense, as these passages stand in support of it.—We may expect, that he will not object to the foundation of *our* faith, till he can shew that *his own* has been raised on one

as solid, and as good ; we may expect, that he will not require *us* to abandon clear scripture, until he can shew that clear scripture is with *him*. Instead of this however, he deceives both us and himself,—he directs us to disbelieve, when the scripture commands us to believe ;—he requires us to reject her authority plain and decisive, and to follow it equivocally and enigmatically expressed. He calls resistance to scripture, *truth* and *sense*, and stigmatizes faith and submission with the guilt of *idolatry*. Judge then ye angels between us ! and thou, Oh *God*, judge us, and distinguish our cause from the *unholy nation* ; deliver us from the *wicked and deceitful man*. (Ps. lxx.)

However it is possible, you reply, that Jesus Christ in this instance may have had a figurative meaning, as when he said that he was a *door* and a *vine*.—No, my Brethren, it is not possible. For in addition to what has already been said, on the inefficacy of this objection, you should re-

mark that Jesus Christ himself tells us in these objected passages, that he is speaking figuratively, and therefore we are right in only taking the expression in a figurative sense. Thus he says, (John xv.) *I am the vine—you are the branches—my Father is the husbandman—you are therefore to me in the same relation that the branches are to the vine ; and every branch, he adds, that beareth not fruit he will take away.* In the same manner he tells us, *he that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold, but climb-eth up another way, the same is a thief and a robber ; amen I say to you, I am the door of the sheep.* * (John x. 1. 7.)

My Brethren, in the other instance he himself fixes the literal sense on his own expressions, makes every declaration more strong and explicit, and calls upon you to believe his words, as he spoke them ; for having informed his disciples that he would give them his *body* and *blood* as food,—to

* St. Paul also calls Christ, a *spiritual Rock*. (1 Cor. x. 4.)

bind their understandings down to his exact words, he adds, *Amen, amen I say to you, except you eat the flesh of the Son of Man, and drink his blood, you shall not have life in you.* (John vi. 54.) He thus solemnly avers that he spoke the essence of truth ;—*except you eat the flesh of the Son of Man, you shall not have life in you,* and confirms the whole by declaring, that *his flesh is meat indeed, and his blood is drink indeed* :—the word *indeed* being so forcibly expressive, as to exclude every figurative sense.

To prove which, let us suppose for example, a dispute to arise between two persons, as to the substance of a piece of metal ;—one affirming it to be imitation, the other gold *indeed*. Would it be necessary for the latter to explain his words? In like manner, let us suppose, that while a Catholic and a Protestant are contending about the meaning of these words, *he that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath everlasting life,* (John vi. 55.) (the one

maintaining that Jesus Christ means hereby his *real flesh*, the other insisting that he only refers to *a figure* in remembrance of his *last supper*,) our Lord seeing them unable to determine the question, interposes his authority, and says, *my flesh is meat INDEED, and my blood is drink INDEED.* (John vi. 56.) In favour of which party does he decide? Undoubtedly every unbiassed person will allow that he gives judgment for the Catholic.

But there is yet another circumstance, to which I must direct your attention, and which the Evangelist seems to have noticed with particular care. In order that we might discern the sense, in which our blessed Saviour's words were spoken, and understood by the multitude, St. John informs us, that after Jesus had persisted in declaring that his *flesh and blood* should be eaten, *many of his disciples went back and walked no more with him.* And he even turned to the twelve and said, *Will you also go away?* (John vi. 67, 68.) Now,

my Brethren, it is evident, that Jesus Christ either required his disciples to receive his words in their true, natural, and literal sense, or he perplexed them by his language, and allowed them to leave him, under a misconception of his doctrine. Therefore, unless you are willing to admit (which God forbid you ever should) that Jesus Christ became the tempter of his own disciples, and made the sacred authority of his words the snare for their virtue—unless you are willing to concede, that this *good Shepherd*, this Saviour of men, felt no concern for those souls, about to return into the ways of perdition,—you must perceive that they never could have been used by Jesus Christ, otherwise than in a *literal* sense. For if they were to bear a *figurative* meaning, why did not Jesus Christ inform his disciples? Why did he persist in drawing them into error, and then abandon them?

Moreover, according to the sentiments of our adversaries, Jesus Christ must have

involved the whole party in mistake. For by the ideas of the Reformers, those who left them were correct as to doctrine and faith, whilst the apostles and others who remained were deceived. For when Jesus asked the twelve, if they would also go away, Peter answered in the name of the rest, *Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life.* The apostles consequently received his words in the wrong sense, and Jesus Christ was bound to enlighten them, as otherwise he must have consented to their *heresy*. Such is the dilemma in which our adversaries would leave us, by their *figurative* explanations;—such the consequences of abandoning the letter of the scripture, for the suggestions of private judgment. It would have been, I insist, in violation of every principle of justice, honour, truth, and charity, had Jesus Christ spoken these words to his disciples in any other than their *literal* sense.

In the second place, the figurative sense of the Protestants, is contrary to the au-

thoritative decisions of that Universal Church, which Jesus Christ promised should always be the oracle of eternal truth; *and I will ask the Father, said he* ¹ *to his apostles, and he shall give you another paraclete, that he may abide with you for ever; the Spirit of Truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, nor knoweth him; but you shall know him; because he shall abide with you, and shall be in you,—I will not leave you orphans.* (John xiv. 16, 17, 18.)

From the earliest period of Christianity, it has been the invariable practice of the Catholic Church to instruct her members in the truths or mysteries of faith, by the rule of sacred scripture, and the learned expositions of those holy fathers, who lived in close succession from the apostles. Their works, which have proved a rich mine of instruction to all succeeding generations, have received the sanction of long antiquity, are the depositaries of apostolical traditions, and the writers are honour-

ed with the title of doctors of the church. So that the unalterable practice of Catholic ministers and preachers has always been, steadily to adhere to these authorities, and to instruct the faithful by them.*—Now these authorities, that is, scripture and the fathers, have ever proved sufficient for the docile children of the Church ; but when prouder spirits have shewn themselves contentious, and obstinately disputed truth in opposition to its pastors, who *have no such custom nor the Church of God*, according to St. Paul, (1 Cor. xi. 16.)—as a sign for the scattered sheep,—and that truth might more loudly triumph,—the faithful spouse of Jesus Christ, the Catholic Church, has universally assembled her bishops in council, and by a canon or formal decree, has proclaimed that faith which shall never fail her ; *against thee, the gates*

* The fathers succeeded the apostles as the luminaries of the Church, and these have been followed by the doctors of divinity as the interpreters of the fathers. Such is the Catholic chain of orthodox tradition.

of hell shall never prevail. (Matt. xvi. 18.)

If then, on the question before us, we have not the explicit decisions of councils, as early as some might expect, it is because the mystery of the real presence in the eucharist was never called in question by any person of sufficient consequence to attract attention until the eleventh century, as I have already observed : since which period however the voice of the Church has been loud and distinct. The more ancient councils however bring support to our cause, by the consonance of their language with our doctrine. Thus in the 18th canon of the first Council of Nice, the eucharist is called the *body of Christ* ; and an ancient author,* who lived in the fifth age, in his books on the acts of that council, offers this instruction : † “ At the holy table let not our attention be fixed on the bread and the cup that is before us, but elevating the soul by faith,

* Gelasius Cysicq.

† Lib. 11. c. 30.

let us recollect, that there is placed on that sacred table, the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sins of the world, and which is immolated in an unbloody manner by the priest; and moreover that truly receiving, as we do, this precious body and blood, we regard them as the symbols of our resurrection."

Such then having been the uninterrupted faith of the Church until the eleventh century, as I will shew on another occasion, there was nothing that called for a more formal declaration, on this point, till Berengarius left the beaten track of his fathers, and began to disseminate a new doctrine. Then the Church rose up with one accord; and the Councils of Rome, Paris, Florence, and many other places, judged his opinions to be heretical, or contrary to revelation, and required him to retract them or leave the fold of the Catholic Church. Now *separate*, says St. Paul, *from every man that is a heretic, after the first and second admonition: know-*

ing that he that is such a one is subverted, and sinneth, being condemned by his own judgment. (Titus iii. 10, 11.) Berengarius in the end sincerely repented of his error, and died piously, confessing the faith of the Catholic Church. The Berengarian heresy then subsided for a time;—but two centuries after was again taken up by our countryman John Wickliff, and was once more met by a fulminating condemnation from the General Council of Constance, in the year 1414; when these three propositions, with others, were formally condemned as heretical, by this body of prelates representing the Universal Church. 1st, The substance of the material bread, and the substance of the material wine, remain in the sacrament of the altar; *condemned.*—2dly, The accidents of bread and wine, do not remain in the eucharist without the substance; *condemned.*—3dly, Christ is not in the same sacrament, identically, and really, with a true corporeal presence; *condemned.*—Which decisions were after-

wards reiterated by the consenting voice of the Latin and Greek Fathers in the General Council of Florence. "*We define,*" they say, "*that the body of Christ is truly produced, whether in unleaven or leaven bread, of wheat-corn : and that the Latin and Greek priests, are to consecrate the true body of our Lord in both ; that is, each after the manner of the Western or Oriental Churches to which he may belong.*"

From the Synod of Florence our attention is immediately called to the celebrated General Council of Trent, which has defined the question in these words.* "*If any one denies that in the sacrament of the most blessed eucharist, there is contained truly, really and substantially, the body and blood, together with the soul and divinity of our Lord Jesus Christ ; and thus the whole Christ ; but shall say, that he is only therein by way of a sign, or a figure, or some virtue ; let him be anathema.*" That is, let

* Sess. 13. can. 1.

him know that he has no part with the faithful. “ *And if any one shall say, that in the most holy sacrament of the eucharist, there remain the substance of the bread and of the wine, together with the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ ; and shall deny the wonderful and singular change of the whole substance of the bread into the body, and of the whole substance of the wine into the blood, the species of bread and wine only remaining, which change, the Catholic Church most properly calls transubstantiation, let him be anathema. And if any one shall say, that in the mass there is not offered to God, a true and proper sacrifice, or that what is offered, is something else, than Christ given to us to be eaten ; or that the sacrifice of the mass, is only a sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving, or a mere commemoration of the sacrifice offered on the cross, and not a propitiatory sacrifice, let him be anathema.*”*

* Sess. 22. can. 1. 3.

Having proved my two first propositions, it remains for me to shew, that the figurative explanation of Protestants is in contradiction with itself. To say that the *body* and *blood* of Jesus Christ are received and eaten, in the *Lord's Supper* only after a spiritual manner, is to use the very language of the Catholic Church,—and is what all Catholics are bound to hold. But to say at the same time that the *body* and *blood* of Jesus Christ, are not *really, verily,* and *substantially* received, is what no man can understand, because it is a direct contradiction. It is to say, that they are received, and are not received,—that they are eaten, and not eaten ;—it is to affirm and deny with the same breath. That the *body* and *blood* of Jesus Christ are only eaten after a spiritual manner, and not carnally, is true ; but then they are eaten, *really, verily,* and *substantially* after a spiritual manner ; and therefore to say, that they are eaten verily and substantially, only

by faith, is to say, that strictly they are not eaten at all, but that the receiver only fancies he eats them in the same manner as ideots receive a paper crown, and persuade themselves that they are kings ;—and verily they are kings by faith, just as much as by faith the Protestant sectary eats the body and blood of Christ.

Indeed, we can scarce suppose that our adversaries are in earnest when they advance such absurdities ;—for I will simply ask them to say, what they really do receive ? Is it *bread*, or is it *the flesh of Christ* ? If they answer, it is the flesh of Christ eaten after a spiritual manner ; then their faith and ours is one and the same : but if they tell me, it is bread that they eat,—then will I ask them, on what authority they affirm it to be any thing else ? Are they herein specially privileged to deviate from truth ? who authorizes their minister to mislead the people, and to say, extending it to the receiver, “*May the*

body of our Lord Jesus Christ, which was given for thee, preserve thy body and soul unto everlasting life. Take and eat this in remembrance that Christ died for thee, and feed on him in thy heart by faith with thanksgiving ;” and “*may the blood of our Lord Jesus Christ which was shed for thee, preserve thy body and soul unto everlasting life. Drink this in remembrance that Christ’s blood was shed for thee, and be thankful.”* And why does he pray, immediately before the consecration, that *those who receive, may be partakers of his most blessed body and blood?* In fine, my Brethren, this figurative explanation of the Church of England involves an absolute contradiction. From it, we can gather nothing, but that it is, and it is not;—it is this, and it is that,—in short, neither one thing nor the other. Truly astonishing then does it appear to me, that any one can refer such absurdities to the Supreme Being, and venture to affix to them the sacred

and sublime faith: but consistent with the

seal of a solemn oath, without apprehending the guilt of perjury.*

“Heretics,” says a sublime writer,† “who deny the real presence of Jesus Christ in the eucharist take from the Church, in as much as they have it in their power, her sacrifice and her priesthood ;—from the temples of God, their sanctity ;—from the faithful, their strength and their consolation ;—from the public worship, its majesty ;—and from the whole of religion its greatest ornament. They deprive the promises of Jesus Christ of their accomplishment ;—his words of their truth and energy ;—the universal tradition of churches of their evidence ;—the works of the fathers of their instruction ;—the canons of councils of their authority ;—the universal practice of ages, of an authentic rule. They

* And yet this is the oath that all persons take in this country on entering into parliament, or any of the offices of government.

† Berthier.

charge all the saints with idolatry ;—all the liturgies with falshood ; — ecclesiastical writers with stupidity ;—the masters of divinity, with weakness ; — and the true Christians, with fanaticism. They destroy that which is the triumph of faith,—the support of hope,—the nourishment of charity. In defence of their errors, they only employ the most frivolous subtilties, and among their precursors, reckon none but a small and contemptible number of very modern heretics. They have no agreement together, nor concord among themselves ; since on this point several of their leaders have multiplied their confessions of faith, and have succeeded in forming a multiplicity of sects all opposed to one another.”

Having now, therefore, shewn the three reasons, for which we object to the doctrine of the Established Church of England, on the article of the eucharist, in conclusion I admit that the tenet of the Catholic Church, undoubtedly requires a strong and sublime faith: but consistent with it-

self it is perfectly analagous to the mystery of the incarnation. Every objection that Protestants advance against the eucharist, has been urged by the Socinians against the incarnate person of Jesus Christ, and the very reasoning which is successfully employed to refute the one, will equally suffice to defeat the other. The same difficulties which present themselves to us, immediately after the sacramental consecration of the species must have operated on the faith of all those, who contemplated the infant Jesus at Bethlehem ;—and to venerate him as a Man-God and the Creator of the universe, whilst shedding his blood upon the cross, was surely as much in contradiction with every human motive of credulity, and as liable to the objections of carnal pride as the worship of the body and blood of Jesus Christ under the humble elements of this adorable sacrament. *

* Hence Socinianism so generally prevails in the Established Church. The same reasoning that persuades a man to *protest* against *transubstantiation*, engages him

And therefore whoever will fix in their recollection, the mystery of the incarnation, the clear language of scripture, and the omnipotence of God,—will find it easy to confess the real presence of Jesus Christ in the Sacrament of the Altar.

to embrace Socinianism.—A Protestant is merely a Christian *in transitu*.



SERMON XXXVII.

ON THE EUCHARISTIC SACRIFICE OF THE
NEW LAW, IN THE LORD'S SUPPER,
COMMONLY CALLED THE MASS.

*We have an Altar, whereof they have no
power to eat, who serve the tabernacle.*
(Heb. xiii. 10.)

IF a person totally unacquainted with the religious rites of the Catholic Church, were to enter a cathedral while the eucharistic mysteries are celebrating at the altar, and, struck with their awful solemnity, should enquire into the nature of that religious rite, he would immediately be told, that it is an offering to the living God, common throughout the Christian world;—and being the Christian sacrifice, which had succeeded to the Jewish sacrifices of the old law, is considered by those who offer it, as the most sacred and sublime act of worship of the Christian religion.

Desirous, moreover, of communicating to him the grounds of such an article of faith, the Catholic minister would immediately open the sacred scripture, and therein shew him the distinct language in which it was spoken of by the inspired prophet Malachias, 500 years before the abolition of the old law. *I have no pleasure in you, saith the Lord of Hosts, exclaims the prophet referring to the Jews after the coming of the Messiah, and I will not receive a gift of your hand. For from the rising of the Sun even to the going down, my name is great among the Gentiles, and in every place there is sacrifice, and there is offered in my name a clean offering : for my name is great among the Gentiles, saith the Lord of Hosts. (Mal. i. 10, 11.)*

My Brethren, you want not me to inform you, that after the fall of our first parents from original grace, sacrifice was to be the grand mean of restoration,—and the oblation of a Redeemer, for the sins of the world, was the act of reparation, which

was to reconcile God to man. As religion therefore is that homage which the Sovereign Creator is pleased to accept from the creature,—when the Deity chose for man the religion of a crucified Messiah, he was pleased to ordain that every religious act of the creature, should have a reference to that sublime and august act of religion, which his incarnate Son Jesus Christ was one day to discharge in person for mankind; and that as the types and figures of his divine sacrifice, he would regard them as agreeable, acceptable, and holy. Hence from the earliest period, the bloody oblation of beasts, and the offering of the choicest fruits, have constituted the one universal form of religion of all the nations of the earth. It was the religion of Adam,—the religion of Noah,—the religion of the other Patriarchs,—and God also made it the national religion of the Jews. If then these offerings were ever to become hateful to him, it was because they were to be polluted and defiled by the insincerity of the

heart; for while figures of the great holocaust of redemption, they would necessarily be a most sweet odour to him, who had instituted them for that end.

When therefore God declared by his prophet to the Jewish priests, *that he would no longer receive a gift from their hands*, this declaration could only refer to that period, when HE being honoured by the more precious oblation of his incarnate Son, the reality should take place of types and figures, and his delight in this sacrifice, would leave him without pleasure, in any other. However, notwithstanding all figurative and explicative sacrifices were to terminate in the great sacrifice consummated on Mount Calvary, yet, sacrifice was still to remain the religion of man; and the conversion of the Gentile nations was to be marked by one sacrifice, which *daily offered, in every place*, should be a *clean offering*, and a sign that *the name of the Lord of Hosts, was great among the Gentiles*, as it had been in Israel.

From the rising of the sun even to the going down, my name is great among the Gentiles, and in every place there is sacrifice, and there is offered in my name a clean offering.

Now if we study the prediction of the prophet, it is evident that this offering of the converted Gentiles, was to be a real sacrifice, from the circumstance of its being noticed by the prophet, as an offering for which they should be distinguished. For were it to be merely a spiritual and interior act, what would there be extraordinary in it? * Jews and all others were allowed to offer their prayers to God, and this interior devotion of the heart formed not only the very life and essence of all the

* Besides, if it were merely a spiritual and interior act, why should not Deacons be able to offer such a sacrifice as well as priests? And yet the first Council of Nice, in its 18th canon expressly declares that they have not the power: *offerendi potestatem non habent.*—In the 13th canon of the same council, mention is also made of an *oblation* in the same sense as the eucharist or communion. *Generaliter autem omni cuilibet in exitu posito, et poscenti sibi eucharistiæ gratiam tribui, Episcopus postquam probaverit, ex oblatione dare debet.*

sacrifices of the old law, but was necessarily associated by the just man, with the exterior oblation of the victim.

Besides, the prophet distinguishes this sacrifice, as universal, or confined to no place, in contradistinction to the Jewish sacrifices, which were limited to one altar, and the one temple of Jerusalem. Scarcely therefore would the prophet have told the Jews, that the Gentiles should be more privileged than themselves, if this privilege were to consist of the unrestrained liberty of prayer, which is no privilege, but rather the inherent right of man.

In further proof, the prophet here alludes to an offering which should be a sign that God is adored by all nations as he had been adored by the Jews : and he makes this universal sacrifice that sign, just as the sacrifices offered by the Jews at Jerusalem were the sign of that supreme worship, which that particular people paid to the Lord of heaven. Now, if this sacrifice of nations implied nothing more than prayer,

or an interior and invisible worship, there would not be the same strength of evidence, that God is as great among the Gentiles, as he had been among the Jews; for supreme religion can only be made manifest by a public and supreme act of worship: and therefore, as *sacrificing* is this act of supreme worship,—while every other species of homage may be paid to the creature, for instance to a magistrate, a parent, a king,—this exclusively belongs to the supreme God, and must be offered to him, in testimony of his being supremely adored.

If then the Gentile nations, while they serve the God of heaven, have not this sign that his name is great and terrible amongst them, the supreme worship of the Jews, will appear better attested, and it will still be the privilege of Juda, to know and to worship God, and the exclusive honour of Israel that his name be great amongst them.

The prophet also, in speaking of the

establishment of a sacrifice among the Gentiles, evidently included the establishment of a priesthood; and signified that God would have among these nations priests and Levites, whose particular office should be to offer this *sacrifice in every place*, as the priests and Levites were specially appointed to offer sacrifices among the Jews. To reduce all to an equality would be to confound; and to deprive religion of that public ministry, which so essentially contributes to her external majesty, would leave the Christian worship of the Gentiles with less august dignity than distinguished that of the Jews.

This is likewise clearly confirmed from the prophecy of Isaiah, who after proclaiming the spread of the gospel over all the nations of the earth, declares, that the Lord will have from *among them his priests and Levites*. (Isaiah lxvi. 21.) Now these words could convey but one signification to the Jews, namely, that there was also

to be a sacrifice among the Gentiles; for sacrifice and priest,—altar and victim, are as essentially co-relatives, as parent and child,—government and subject. The one implies the other; which is also signified by St. Paul, who in his Epistle to the Hebrews says, *every high priest taken from among men, is appointed for men, in the things that appertain to God, that he may offer up gifts and sacrifices for sins.* (Heb. v. 1.)

It is therefore most evident, that the universal sacrifice of the Gentiles, foretold by Malachy, was to be, 1st, A visible and external sacrifice, succeeding to the sacrifices of the old law, and constituting the most essential part of the public worship, and the most sacred act of religion: 2dly, A public testimony of the conversion of the Gentile nations to the Lord of Hosts; since they were to offer in every place a pure victim, and by this act to render him supreme adoration, and acknowledge him to be the only God.

In continuation of proof, with St. Jerom and other learned expositors of scripture, I will again instance the authority of the sublime Isaiah, who in his 19th chapter, very distinctly adverts to this future sacrifice of the new law. After describing the misery and excessive punishment that should befall the land of Egypt for its idolatrous iniquities (and Egypt is often used by the sacred writers as a term to express the whole of the heathen Gentile nations) the prophet predicts their conversion to the Lord;—*who will send them a Saviour*, and declares, *in that day*, there shall be friendship between the *Assyrian* and *Egyptian*,* and a common way; and the Gentile *Assyrian* and *Egyptian* shall be preferred to *Israel*, and there shall be a blessing in the midst of the land. *And in that day there shall be an altar of the Lord,*

* That is, the members of the Church, whatever be their nation, shall be united in the bond of charity and peace.

in the midst of the land of Egypt, and a monument of the Lord on the borders thereof; it shall be for a sign and for a testimony to the Lord of Hosts, in the land of Egypt. For they shall cry to the Lord because of the oppressor, and he shall send them a Saviour and a Defender to deliver them. And the Lord shall be known by Egypt, and the Egyptians shall know the Lord in that day, and shall worship him with sacrifices and offerings; and they shall make vows to the Lord and perform them. (Isai. xix. 19, 20, 21.)

Truly then I may exult, when from the testimony of the scriptures, I am not only able clearly to prove the Christian sacrifice of the Gentiles, but behold the prophets emphatically distinguishing that act of supreme religious worship. For as in three successive verses, Isaiah repeats his declaration, that there shall be *an altar of the Lord in the midst of the land, and a monument of the Lord at the borders thereof*, he not only seems to express, what

Malachy afterwards positively declares, namely, that *in every place* among the Gentiles, *there should be sacrifice and a clean offering to the Lord*, but moreover says, what I have laboured to make you understand,—*that it should be for a sign and for a testimony to the Lord of Hosts in the land of Egypt*. For, as the consequence of their knowledge of him was to be that they would offer sacrifices to him,—it becomes a confirmation of that principle I laid down, as the groundwork of this discourse, that **SACRIFICE IS THE RELIGION OF MAN.** *And the Lord shall be known by Egypt, and the Egyptians shall know the Lord in that day, and shall worship him with sacrifices and offerings.* (Isai. xix. 21.)

Such is the language in which the inspired prophets have spoken of the Christian sacrifice of the Gentiles, and in it they are completely supported by the evidence of the New Testament. The psalmist had proclaimed the Messiah and begotten Son of God *a Priest for ever according to the*

order of Melchisedech. (Ps. cix. 4.) And the apostle St. Paul repeatedly presses this text upon the Jews, thereby urging them to attend both to the priesthood and the sacrifice of Melchisedech ; and begins the 8th chapter of his Epistle to the Hebrews in this manner : Now, of the things which we have spoken, this is the sum ; we have such a High Priest, who is set on the right-hand of the throne of majesty in the heavens—For every high priest is appointed to offer gifts and sacrifices ; wherefore it is necessary that he also should have something to offer. (Heb. viii. 1. 3.)

In considering that text of the Psalmist, on which the apostle lays so great a stress, *thou art a priest for ever according to the order of Melchisedech*, and which declaration, as he remarks, was attested by the oath of a God, *The Lord has sworn and he will not repent*, there are two deductions which immediately present themselves to our attention. First, that to be a *priest for ever*, he must for ever have a sacrifice to

offer : 2dly, In testimony that he is of *the order of Melchisedech*, he must for ever offer the same sacrifice as Melchisedech. In the first place then, to be a perpetual priest, he must for ever have a sacrifice to offer ; otherwise, the once having offered sacrifice, could confer no title on him which would not also belong to the priesthood of Aaron. Those, says St. Paul, *of the order of Aaron, were many priests, because by reason of death, they were not suffered to continue ; but this, for that he continueth for ever, hath an everlasting priesthood, whereby he is able also to save for ever them, that come to God by him, always living to make intercession for us.* (Heb. vii. 23, 24.) Now as it was decreed from the beginning, by infinite Wisdom, that sacrifice should be the mode of intercession, and the mean of reconciliation between God and man,—and as it was for this, that every priest was appointed, so in quality of eternal Priest, interceding for the multiplied sins of the world, he must for

ever have an oblation to offer ; *Thou art a Priest for ever.*

2dly, It follows, that to be a *priest for ever of the order of Melchisedech*, he must for ever offer the sacrifice as Melchisedech ; or by what other sign are we to know that he is of the same order of priesthood ? Now, *Melchisedech*, says the scripture, *brought forth bread and wine, for he was a priest of the Most High God.* (Gen. xiv. 18.) But there is such a manifest difference between the mere oblation which Melchisedech made of bread and wine, and the bloody sacrifice, which the Messiah offered on the cross, that without the eucharistic sacrifice of the new law, every thing would lead us to conclude that their priesthoods were of a distinct kind. Indeed I will maintain, that it is otherwise impossible to shew a resemblance either in the priest, or in the sacrifice. The scripture notices but two orders of priesthood ; the order of Aaron, and the order of Melchisedech. The priesthood of Aaron offer-

ed a bloody sacrifice,—the priesthood of Melchisedech, one clean, and unbloody. Our High Priest therefore, Jesus Christ, has united both in his own person ; first the priesthood of Aaron, by the bloody oblation, which he made of himself on Mount Calvary ; and 2dly, the priesthood of Melchisedech, by the clean oblation which he continues to make of himself, in the sacrifice of the new law, wherein he has most formally and absolutely realized the words of the Royal Prophet quoted by St. Paul, *The Lord hath sworn, and he will not repent, thou art a Priest for ever according to the order of Melchisedech.*

Now that these orders of priesthood were distinguished by the quality of their sacrifices, is evident from this circumstance, that Jesus Christ himself was in no other manner of the order of Aaron, as it is acknowledged by St. Paul. *It is evident, he says, that our Lord sprung out of Juda : in which tribe Moses spoke nothing concerning priests.* (Heb. vii. 14.) And in order to shew that

there was a most particular reason for thus characterizing the Messiah of the *order of Melchisedech*, and for refusing to him in the new law the characteristic of the *order of Aaron*, which was *blood* (*and almost all things, according to the law, are cleansed with blood,*) (Heb. ix. 22.)—the apostle immediately before writes, *If then perfection was by the Levitical priesthood (for under it the priesthood received the law) what further need was there that another priest should rise according to the order of Melchisedech, and not be called according to the order of Aaron?* (Heb. vii. 11.) In the following verse then he intimates that a new commandment was substituted, not having the weakness and unprofitableness of the former; *there is indeed*, he says, *a setting aside of the former commandment, because of the weakness and unprofitableness thereof, (for the law brought nothing to perfection) but a bringing in of a better hope; by which we draw nigh to God.* He then immediately after adds, *Jesus is made*

a surety of a better testament. (Heb. vii. 18, 19, 22.) Now the very word *testament* as explained by the same apostle, (*a testament is of force after men are dead*, Heb. ix. 17.) proves that the *former testament* was a figure of one that was to endure *after the death of the testator*, (ver. 15, 16.) and representative of the eucharistic sacrifice of the new law.

Moreover, this sacrifice of the Gentiles receives additional proof from this declaration of the apostle to the Hebrews, *that the priesthood of Aaron being translated, it is necessary that a translation also be made of the law.* (Heb. vii. 12.) For as sacrifice was the essence and vital part of the law, it was therefore necessarily transferred with the law; which is rendered still more evident by a passage in the Epistle of St. Paul to Titus, in which he reminds him, *that he had left him in Crete, that he might appoint priests in every city.* Now, unless scriptural language is to bear a different interpretation from every other,

the appointment of a priest, in every city, implies the function of a priest in every city, that is, the offering of sacrifice ; for in historical reading I am positive, none ever understood the one without the other ; and thus we behold the early accomplishment of the prophecy of Malachy, *there is sacrifice in every place among the Gentiles, and to my name a clean offering, saith the Lord of Hosts.*

Another passage of St. Paul, which I must not forget to notice, is that which I have assumed as my text. *We have an altar,* writes the apostle, *whereof they have no power to eat, who serve the tabernacle.* (Heb. xiii. 10.) Sensible that there are many who would tell me, that the altar to which St. Paul here alludes, is the altar of the Cross, I must reply, that St. Paul seems plainly to refer to some other altar, because he speaks of one, at which the faithful *eat* of the sacrifice. Now, it is evident to all, that none eat of the bloody sacrifice of the cross,—there must have been one, there-

fore, in the form of food, which directly implies the sacrifice of the new law, which like the sacrifice of Melchisedech is completed by being eaten.

The principal and only solid objection that can be brought against this evidence for a sacrifice in the new law, is drawn from the unity and integrity of Christ's oblation on the Cross,—*By one oblation*, writes the apostle, *he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified*; (Heb. x. 14.) and in the 26th verse of the same chapter he even says, *if we sin willingly after having the knowledge of the truth, there is now left no sacrifice for sins*. Having remarked that these passages seem abundantly to confirm the declaration of St. Peter, that in the Epistle of St. Paul, *there are many things hard to be understood, which the unlearned and the unstable wrest, as they also do the other scriptures to their own destruction*,—(1 Peter iii. 16.) I must remind you moreover of the great caution, docility and virtue necessary for the study of the scrip-

ture.—In respect to this last text therefore, which apparently contradicts that for which I am principally contending, you must observe, that the apostle is speaking of impenitent apostates from the faith; who if they persist in their crimes to the end, will be without the means of redemption, for there remains no sacrifice for sins in the next life, *but a certain dreadful expectation of judgment and the rage of a fire, which shall consume the adversaries.* (Heb. xvi. 27.) This is still clearer from what follows; *a man making void the law of Moses, dieth without any mercy under two or three witnesses. How much more do you think he deserveth worse punishments, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath esteemed the blood of the Testament unclean, by which he was sanctified, and hath offered an affront to the Spirit of Grace;* which in fact is properly the irremissible sin against the Holy Ghost. For the gate of mercy only closes upon the sinner with his last breath.

In regard to the objection, * as it stands grounded on the unity of Christ's sacrifice, I answer also that it is null and unavailing, because the sacrifice of the new law, and the sacrifice of Calvary, are one and the same, and only differ in the manner of offering. For Jesus Christ having once offered himself in a bloody sacrifice, after the manner of Aaron, on the altar of the Cross, continues still to offer himself on our altars, in a clean oblation, after the manner of Melchisedech; and since the priest and the victim remain the same, the same also is the sacrifice. We minister with our High Priest Jesus Christ, and our priesthood is but a branch of his. Therefore in the frequent mention, which the apostle makes of the one oblation which Jesus Christ made for the sins of the world, he always refers to his bloody and painful sacrifice on Mount Calvary, which was never to be repeated;—

* As the same objection may be founded on other passages of this epistle, so they may be replied to, by the same answer.

whereas in speaking of him as *a priest for ever*, he alludes to that continual oblation with which, he was to glorify his Father before men and angels, in the sacrifice of the new law; and which is explained in some manner by St. John in his book of the Apocalypse saying; *I saw in the midst of the ancients a lamb standing as it were slain.* (Apoc. v. 6.)

Without stopping to indulge, in those grand ideas, which here rush upon the mind, I shall conclude, after noticing a difficulty which many may wish to see explained; namely, how does it happen that the sacred writers, both of the Old, and New Testament, have not delivered themselves more fully and distinctly on this important subject? In answer, it must be observed that the prophets could only speak in figures, as they were directed by God. It is evident moreover, that the understandings of men were at that period so gross and carnal, that they were wholly unprepared to receive any specific declara-

tion on so sublime a mystery ; it might have been attended with the worst of consequences, and would not have been properly understood. It was only under the most guarded expressions that they made mention of the Messiah, who in the vulgar opinion of the Jews, was expected to appear in the character of a worldly prince. This cautious conduct even the apostles and evangelists thought it prudent to observe in addressing the pagans and newly converted Christians, and therefore were singularly circumspect in touching on the great mysteries of religion, fearing to offer food which some could not take, or scandalize when they meant to edify.

This St. Paul indeed openly confesses to be his case, on the very subject before us, the mysterious priesthood and sacrifice of Melchisedech. *Christ, says the apostle, is called by God a High Priest according to the order of Melchisedech, of whom we have much to say, and hard to be intelligibly uttered ; because you are become weak to*

hear, for whereas for the time you ought to be masters, you have need to be taught again which are the first elements of the word of God ; and you are become such as have need of milk and not of strong meat. For every one that is a partaker of milk is unskilful in the word of justice ; for he is a little child. But strong meat is for the perfect. (Heb. v. 10, 11, 12, 13, 14.) I trust you will carry this declaration of the apostle continually in your minds ; and remembering that there are mysteries of faith, not clearly expressed in scripture, will humbly submit to the revered judgment of Christ's Catholic Church.



SERMON XXXVIII.

ON THE ANCIENT TYPES AND FIGURES OF
THE EUCHARISTIC SACRIFICE OF THE
NEW LAW IN THE LORD'S SUPPER,
COMMONLY CALLED THE MASS.

Christ our Pasch is sacrificed. (1 Cor. v. 7.)

OUR Protestant Brethren of all descriptions are so persuaded, that there is no other form of public worship besides preaching and prayer, that when they enter a Catholic Church, whilst the priest is performing that sacred act of religion called the *Mass*,* their ideas are so complete-

* The word *Mass*, in Latin *Missa*, is derived from the corruption of *Missio*, which originally expressed the dismissal of those who were not permitted to be present at the eucharistic mysteries. Immediately before the Offertory, the deacon, turning to the people, and addressing the catechumens, said, *Ite Missio*, or *Missa est*, *Go, we give you your dismissal*. St. Augustin, St. Avitus of

ly estranged and confounded, at the nature and purpose of that action, that they

Vienna, and St. Isidore of Seville, have stated this origin of the expression too clearly, as Le Brun observes, for us to doubt it. In the same manner are to be found similar corruptions of language in the works of Tertullian, St. Cyprian, and St. Jerom. In Tert. lib. 4. c. 18. cont. Marcio, we read *diximus de REMISSA peccatorum*. In St. Cyprian we likewise read, *qui autem blasphemaverit Spiritum Sanctum non habebit REMISSAM*;—also, *qui apud illos baptizatur consecutus est peccatorum REMISSAM*. (Ed. ap. Ep. 16. 73. pp. 36. 200.)

Le Brun also remarks, that St. Jerom likewise uses *collata* for *collectio*, in his Epistle to Paula; and the same in his 60th letter,—St. Austin speaking of the departure of the catechumens from the Church, before the oblation, expresses himself in this manner; *fit missa catechumenis, manebunt fideles*, (Serm. 49. al. 237.) and St. Isidore about the year 600, says that from this dismissal comes the word *Missa*. *Missa tempore sacrificii est, quando, catechumeni foras mittuntur, et inde MISSA*.

This explanation is moreover upheld by the learned authorities of Benedict XIV, Bellarmine, Bona, Vicecount, Georgius, Cassander, Ducange, Van Espen, Vertus, Natalis Alexander, Frassen, Silvius, St. Thomas Aquinas, Bocquillot, and Bossuet.

To the absolute date of the antiquity of the expression, it would be difficult for us correctly to refer. Suffice it therefore to say with Pope Benedict XIV. in his work *de*

become bewildered and lost in astonishment, and usually retire declaring it to be

Sac. Missæ, lib. 2. c. 1.—that “the sacrifice was styled the *Mass* in the Council of Chalcedon, in which both Latin and Greek Fathers were assembled,—also in the second and third Council of Carthage, at which St. Austin was present,—and in the Council of Ephesus, according to Wallemburg, tom. 2. Controv. Tract. 1. c. 37. St. Ambrose relates in his 20th epistle, class 1. num. 4. edit. Ben. that when he was at Milan, and the Empress was desirous of giving possession of the church to the Arians, whilst he was officiating, it was mentioned to him that soldiers had been dispatched from the palace to occupy it, which they actually did, after the Lessons and the Sermon, when the catechumens had retired.—That he however, without any apprehension continued the service;—“*I however,*” he said, “*remained in my station, and began mass.*” Ego tamen (inquit) *mansi in munere, missam facere capi.*

Things have frequently various appellations, which they borrow from particular circumstances attending them. Hence the eucharistic oblation was styled *Mass*, from the dismissal of the catechumens—it was also called *liturgy*, signifying *the service*, also *synaxis*, and *collecta*, that is *the assembly*, or *meeting*.—*Liturgy* and *Mass* however are the two at present ordinarily used by the Catholic Church; the first by the Greeks, the other by the Latins.

Though names are of very considerable use in retaining a recollection of things, the Protestants notwithstanding, at the reformation, determined to introduce a term not

the most august and solemn, yet the most unmeaning and superstitious act of public

common among the faithful; which, they boasted of having drawn from the *scriptures*, and as such maintained to be far preferable to any other. As words in themselves are only the signs of the things they represent, the Catholic Church, probably, would not have found matter for censure in this act of the reformists, if the things themselves, that is the objects of faith, had remained untouched. But under the pretext and colour of a *new name*, the Protestants were desirous of introducing an alteration in the point of faith; for not satisfied with accommodating the term to the object, they attempted to accommodate the object to the term; and in this manner would have disseminated *heresy* under the disguise of a scriptural expression. Catholics therefore, fully aware of the artful and diabolical designs of the reformists, have on this account always been backward in adopting the Protestant expression for the eucharist, "*Lord's Supper*;" because they evidently saw that something unfair was intended by it; and on this account it has been seldom used by Catholic writers; who rather wished to mark their distinction of faith, by preserving this distinction of language.

In as much as the person using the expression means what is expressed by *Mass* and *Eucharist*, the term is perfectly good and lawful; and therefore as Protestants have now so generally forgotten the meaning of the other terms, as to be no longer capable of

worship they ever beheld. By no means surprised at this, when I consider the ef-

understanding them without an explanation, I have not wholly abstained from employing the term *Lord's Supper*; and I have thus acted with the view of making myself better understood by our adversaries. Indeed, I find it absolutely impossible to make the generality of these Christians comprehend the nature of the institution of the *Mass*, without employing at times that expression which their peculiar circumstances and their prejudices have now rendered so venerable to them. I must observe however, that my only motive has been to explain the Catholic faith to those who were not likely to understand the ordinary language of the Church; and therefore I trust that Catholics will continue to respect those religious terms which have been sanctified by high antiquity, and are still familiar to them. At the same time I wish them to remark that there is no impropriety in the expression itself,—that as we learn from ecclesiastical historians, (*Fleury's Mœurs des Chrét.* p. 211.) the *Mass* in the early ages of Christianity, was also denominated the *Cæna* or *Supper*;—that the very day of the institution is designated by it in the Latin Office of the Church,—and that it is frequently used by the holy fathers. The first, or King Edward's edition of the Protestant Common Prayer-Book, also contains this title, THE SUPPER OF THE LORD CALLED THE MASS. Thus I have endeavoured to accommodate myself to the circumstances of those I am instructing; and in doing this, I am supported by great authorities. St. Basil says, "We have no reason to apprehend mischief, when we a

fects which prejudice and habits of education produce in the minds of men,—I still

little alter our expressions, provided we say the same thing in other terms, because in reality, our salvation does not depend on *words*, but on *things*." (*Apud Greg. Naz. Orat. 2.*) And this great saint whom I have quoted, acted so conformably to this principle, that he who had so divinely written and spoken of the divinity and consubstantiality of the Holy Ghost, abstained for some time from the use of these expressions, and contented himself with proving this point of doctrine by those evidences of scripture which expressed the same thing in different terms. And for this he was most highly commended by Saint Gregory Nazianzen*, that bold opponent of the heretics of that age, who, in his funeral oration, defends him against certain rigorists, who were scandalized at his prudence, which urged him, for the sake of peace, not to employ certain words, but to express whatever Catholics hold in other terms less obnoxious. If then such was the conduct of this great saint, for the sake of peace, surely others will be justified in accommodating themselves to language, when the cause is to infuse the Catholic faith into the minds of the ignorant. Indeed, the caution observed by the Church in forming and wording her solemn decisions, evinces how careful she is, not to throw, unnecessarily, a stumbling-block in the way of the faithful. Whilst however I am ready to accommodate myself to the circumstances of Protestants, in conveying instruction to them,

* Greg. Naz. Orat. 20. p. 364, Edit. Par. an. 1609.

conceive that the balance of their conclusion is all in favour of that religious act. For whilst they allow it to be the most august and solemn they ever witnessed, they only pronounce it unmeaning and superstitious, because according to their own confession, they do not understand it.* I know the great difficulty there is in working a change of sentiment on any religious point;—for as none interest us so highly, so none are conceived with such strong impressions, and consequently none so lastingly fixed.

before I quit this subject, I am desirous of declaring my decided disapprobation of any forms of expression tending to reduce the Catholic faith to the level of Protestant ideas—and therefore I strongly object to those forms of language which are becoming very common among us; such as, *to hear prayers*, instead of *to hear Mass*—or to speak of an officiating *clergyman*, instead of an officiating *priest*. The first confounds the sacrifice of the Mass, with our common morning prayers—the latter, the minor orders of the church, with the successors of the apostles of Jesus Christ.

* The Mass is an act of adoration, not of instruction. On that account the catechumens in the primitive Church were not permitted to be present.

Education and prejudice may have firmly persuaded the reformed Protestant therefore, that all religious worship must exclusively consist in preaching and prayer.—But I may ask him, are there not different species of prayer? Is there not vocal, as well as silent prayer? Is there not a prayer accompanied with public signs and ceremonies, as well as that which is the more quiet expression of the heart? Is there not such a species of prayer as SACRIFICE? Abel prayed to God with *offerings, and the Lord, says the scripture, had respect to Abel and to his offerings.* (Gen. iv. 4.) Noah going forth from the ark, prayed to God with offerings *of all cattle and fowl that were clean, and his holocausts were a sweet savour to the Lord.* (Gen. viii. 20, 21.) Melchisedech returned thanks to God with an offering of *bread and wine, and he, says the scripture, was the priest of the Most High God.* (Gen. xiv. 18.) Abraham accompanied all his solemn conversations with God, with the prayer of sacrifice, as

did Isaac and Jacob,—and Job made it his daily morning prayer, for his family. (Job i. 5.)

When God also instituted for the Israelites the form of their religious worship, he made the prayer of sacrifice its most essential part;—he even condescended himself to regulate the ceremonies and manner in which it was to be performed, and repeatedly declared that such prayer would be to him an *odour of sweetness*. David, Solomon, Elias, and the other holy prophets, prayed to God, with the prayer of sacrifice, and Jesus Christ the divine Redeemer of men, finally interceded for us with the prayer of sacrifice, and was heard: or as the apostle expresses it, *in the days of his flesh, with a strong cry and tears, offering up prayers and supplications to him that was able to save him from death, was heard for his reverence.* (Heb. v. 7.)

Shall then, that form of worship originally prescribed to man now cease? Shall he be prohibited by the new law from adoring his Creator in the way that his fathers did?

Or is not the new law to be the perfection of the old,—and the substance that is to succeed the type and the figure? Yes, writes the prophet, *in every place among the Gentiles there is sacrifice, and to the name of the Lord of Hosts a clean offering*; (Mal. i. 11.) which is also confirmed by the words of Christ himself to the Samaritan woman. *Woman*, said the divine Jesus, *believe me that the hour cometh when you shall neither on this mountain, nor in Jerusalem adore the Father*; (that is, when there shall be no question about either of these places) *but the hour cometh, and now is, when the true adorers shall adore the Father in spirit and in truth*; (John iv. 21, 23.) that is, when my followers will worship him, with a *true* and *real* sacrifice. When, therefore, the Protestant reformer again considers the mystery of the mass, let him view it as the universal sacrifice of the new law,—the clean oblation of the priesthood of Melchisedech, and the solid pledge of our redemption. For if Jesus Christ, as St. Paul says, is a *high-priest*

according to the order of Melchisedech,
we are his *Levites*.

My Brethren, I have already said much, in my last discourse, upon the establishment of the sacrifice of the new law, and have a great deal more to say in other discourses which are to follow on the same subject. At present I intend simply to shew, as an illustration of my last instruction, that this clean offering of the new law is as distinctly represented by ancient types and figures, as was the bloody sacrifice of Calvary. In other words, that almost all the ancient types of the sacrifice of the cross, are also perfect types of the sacrifice of the mass. Not that I mean to produce a mere figure, as an authority on which I would ground your faith, in such an important matter, but only as an evidence that will illustrate what I consider already proved, and which I will hereafter prove to your still firmer conviction.

Observe, therefore, that all the sacrifices of the old law were figures of the sacrifice

that was to come in the new,—and what is deserving of more particular notice, like the sacrifice of the new law, were offered under two very different forms of offering. The first I shall mention, was the bloody immolation of an animal that was afterwards wholly consumed upon the altar by fire,—termed a holocaust. This was properly the complete sacrifice and destruction of the victim, and expressed, under a most clear and lively figure, the violent death, and bloody sacrifice of Jesus Christ on Mount Calvary. In this class of sacrifices, we are to place all the holocausts of the patriarchs and Jews, and particularly the sacrifice which Abraham was about to make of his son Isaac.

The second form of ancient sacrifice, and which was by far the more general form, was that in which there was not an entire destruction of the victim, and where the oblation was consummated by the eating of the sacrifice. This species of sacrifice existed from the beginning, as ap-

pears by the offerings of Abel and Melchisedech,—and was in the most express manner enjoined the Jews, by the written commands of God in the Levitical law. Indeed, the command was, that no animal should be offered to him, in sacrifice, which was not considered clean, and used as the ordinary food of man. It is evident then, that this singular characteristic in the sacrifices of the old law, could have no reference to any thing that happened during the bloody oblation of Jesus Christ, on Mount Calvary ; whereas it does most strikingly apply to the continued oblation of the same victim, under the forms of bread and wine. *I am the living bread,* says Jesus Christ, *which came down from heaven,—and the bread that I will give is my flesh,—for the life of the world,—my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed.* (John vi. 51, 52, 56.)

From that multitude of sacrifices, which were figures of a sacrifice in the new law in the form of food, I shall select but two,

which of themselves, present such striking illustrations, that the mention of a thousand examples would not have stronger force.

The first is the sacrifice of the *Paschal Lamb*, as ordered by God, in the book of Exodus. *Speak*, said God to Moses and Aaron, *speak to the whole assembly of the children of Israel, and say to them; on the tenth day of this month, let every man take a lamb by their families and houses; but if the number be less than may suffice to eat the lamb, he shall take unto him his neighbour that joineth to his house, according to the number of souls which may be enough to eat the lamb. And it shall be a lamb without blemish, a male of one year; according to which rite, also you shall take a kid, and you shall keep it until the fourteenth day of this month, and the whole multitude of the children of Israel shall sacrifice it in the evening. And they shall take the blood thereof, and put it upon both the side posts and on the upper door posts of the houses wherein*

they shall eat it. And they shall eat the flesh that night roasted at the fire, and unleavened bread with wild lettuce. You shall not eat thereof any thing raw, nor boiled in water, but only roasted at the fire; you shall eat the head with the feet and entrails thereof. Neither shall there remain any thing of it until morning. If there be any thing left, you shall burn it with fire—And this day shall be for a memorial to you; and you shall keep it a feast to the Lord in your generations with an everlasting observance. (Exod. xii. 3—14.)

In this sacrifice, my Brethren, we have the most distinct type and representation possible of the form and essence of the sacrifice of the new law. The *lamb* was the figure of that true *Lamb of God* which was to be offered in sacrifice for the sins of the world. *Behold the Lamb of God*, cried St. John, (i. 29.) *behold him who taketh away the sins of the world.* But however plainly it might have signified the bloody sacrifice of the victim, on Mount Calvary, it as

plainly expressed another form of offering, in which the altar would become the table of sacrifice, and in which the *Lamb of God* would be given as food *for the life of the world*; (John vi. 52.) which in fact is the very essence of the eucharistic sacrifice of the new law, commonly called the *Mass*, and which the prophet Malachy foretold should be *offered in every place from the rising to the setting sun*. (Mal. i. 11.) For being the continued oblation of Calvary under a different form of offering, it is not a different sacrifice, but a new oblation of the same victim—not a second bloody immolation, or expiation attended with pain and insult, but the prayer of supplication, in which the *Lamb* voluntarily places himself on the altar of immolation, in the presence of the throne of God before men and angels. Thus making that very altar a table of grace and benediction, at which he most intimately unites himself to us under the mystical and visible sign of food,—he copiously applies to

our souls the spiritual treasures once purchased with his blood, and is finally consumed in communion, the exhausted victim of piety and eternal love.

Now, is it possible that any shadow can be more like to the substance than the form and essence of the paschal sacrifice of the Jews, are like to the oblation of Jesus Christ in the new law among the Gentiles? Indeed, without the latter it would be impossible to explain the figure; for it must be particularly observed, that the *Lamb* that was slain, was eaten by the sacrificers, — that the altar became the table of communion, — and thus the holocaust was completed. *

It must be admitted, therefore, that as there was nothing in the bloody sacrifice of Calvary, which can be said to have realized *this* part of the figure, — either it had no meaning at all, or it referred to another form of offering. Now that it

* The *buck-gout* was also to be eaten for sin within the sanctuary. (Levit. x. 18.)

had a meaning is evident, from the great stress God laid on that act. *Let every man said he take a lamb by their families and houses : but if the number be less than may suffice to eat the lamb, he shall take unto him his neighbour, that joineth to his house, according to the number of souls which may be enough to eat the lamb.—They shall eat the flesh that night roasted at the fire ; the head with the feet and entrails thereof, neither shall there remain any thing of it until morning. If there be any thing left you shall burn it with fire.* As the eating therefore must have referred to another form of offering, it could only refer to the eucharistic oblation of the new law, under the forms of bread and wine.

The other figure, to which I refer, as emblematical of the sacrifice of the new law, is the clean oblation of bread and wine by Melchisedech. The scripture informs us, in a very short and mysterious manner, that when Abraham returned victorious from the just war he had undertaken, the King of Sodom

went out to meet him ;—but *Melchisedech King of Salem bringing forth bread and wine, for he was the priest of the Most High God, blessed him.* (Gen. xiv. 18.) These words are admitted by all to involve a vast deal of mystery ; and as Jesus Christ is frequently described by the inspired writers a *Priest for ever according to the order of Melchisedech*, it is universally allowed that this *King of Salem, or Jerusalem*, was a figure of the divine Messiah. By interpretation, writes St. Paul, he is *King of justice ; and then also King of Salem, that is King of Peace, without father, without mother, without genealogy, having neither beginning of days, nor end of life ; but likened unto the Son of God, continueth a Priest for ever.* (Heb. vii. 2, 3.)

The sacred scriptures report of this personage but three things ; he is *King of Salem, or Jerusalem* ; he is *Priest of the Most High God, having neither beginning nor end of life* ; and he sacrifices in *bread and wine*. Behold then in the divine Jesus

the royal heir of the house of David, *this Priest for ever according to the order of Melchisedech*, instituting at his last Supper the sacrifice of the new law, under the forms of *bread and wine*.—*Do this*, said he, *for a commemoration of me*. (Luke xxii. 19.)

Here, my Brethren, consider again and again,—and as you contemplate, and study the sacrifice of the new law, in the figure of Melchisedech, admire and worship that eternal wisdom, which so many ages before, could thus clearly represent it in every essential circumstance.—Venerate in absolute humility, the unalterable decrees of heaven, and bow down all the powers of the soul in adoration of a mystery incomprehensible to man. But I must abstain from reflections my object being to prove.

It may be objected perhaps by the reformer, that as there is nothing, in this type, which can express more than a commemorative offering of *bread and wine*

in the new law, so it can never be in proof of the oblation of the true *Lamb of God*, under these forms.—To this objection, I reply, that where there is a shadow, there must exist a substance,—that no figure can be the type of a figure, and therefore, in the oblation of *bread and wine* in the new law, there must be an essential difference, and excellence, which did not belong to the same oblation in the old ;—otherwise we shall probably hear of a copy without an original.—Consequently as Melchisedech, a figure of Christ, stands forth a *Priest of the Most High God*, sacrificing in *bread and wine*, so the holiness of the sacrifice which Jesus, the substance of the figure, offers under the same form, must as far surpass the holiness of the type, as the divine Priesthood of Jesus Christ is more excellent than the figurative priesthood of Melchisedech. Which is confirmed by St. Paul, who thus writes ; *the chalice of benediction which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ ? and the bread*

which we break, is it not the partaking of the body of the Lord? (1 Cor. x. 16.)

Besides, that the sacrifice of *bread* and *wine* by Melchisedech, referred directly to the future oblation of Jesus Christ, under the forms of *bread* and *wine*, in the new law, is also evident from the circumstance that our divine Redeemer joined this oblation, and the sacrifice of the *Paschal Lamb* together, at his last Supper, and offered them both on the same occasion. Which was proper to shew, that they both related to the same sacrifice, and only expressed a different manner of offering. It moreover signifies how immediately the bleeding figurative sacrifices of the old law, should be succeeded by the clean oblation of the new, and that no sooner should the real *Pasch* be immolated on Mount Calvary, than the true sacrifice of nations after the manner of Melchisedech should commence. And to this period those words particularly applied, which God addressed, by his prophet, to the Jewish Priests, *I have no*

pleasure in you, saith the Lord of Hosts ; and I will not receive a gift of your hand, for from the rising of the sun even to the going down, my name is great among the Gentiles, and in every place there is sacrifice, and there is offered to my name a clean offering ; for my name is great among the Gentiles. (Mal. i. 10, 11.)

Another fact, in evidence, which as yet, I have declined to mention, in order to avoid confusion, is the contemporary establishment of the feast of the unleavened bread, with the feast of the paschal lamb. *And you shall observe the feast of the unleavened bread, said God to the Jews ; for in this same day I will bring forth your army out of the land of Egypt, and you shall keep this day in your generations by a perpetual observance.—Unleavened bread shall you eat seven days ; there shall not be seen any thing leavened with thee, nor in all thy coasts, and thou shalt tell thy son in that day saying, this is what the Lord did to me, when I came forth out of Egypt. And it*

shall be a sign in thy hand, and as a memorial before thy eyes : for with a strong hand the Lord hath brought thee out of the land of Egypt. (Exod. xii. 17.—xiii. 7, 8, 9.)—

This feast, and the feast of the paschal lamb were both equally appointed as commemorations of the salvation of the Jews from the Egyptians, which was moreover a figure of the salvation of the world by Jesus Christ, from the bondage of sin ; and as such they were perfect types of the clean oblation of the Gentiles in the new law, which is every where offered as a perpetual commemorative sacrifice of the world's redemption by Jesus Christ on the cross. *As often, says St. Paul, as you shall eat this bread, and drink of this chalice, you shall shew the death of the Lord until he come. (1 Cor. xi. 26.)* Therefore, the feast of the paschal lamb, and the feast of unleavened bread were both figures of a sacrifice, which was to be offered by the Messiah.—I will then simply ask the honest Christian, if there could be more striking

figures of the bloody sacrifice of the cross, and of the unbloody sacrifice of Jesus Christ under the forms of bread and wine in the mass.

I think I may now call upon the Protestant reformer to reconsider those conclusions which he has hitherto formed on the sacrifice of the mass; I ask him not to decide until I have conducted him into the very focus of conviction. But let the arguments I have used teach him to suspect the prepossessions of prejudice, and to hesitate in pronouncing against a mystery, which forms the most important, sacred, and essential part of the religion of Jesus Christ;—which has ever marked the progress of Christianity throughout the world, and which always was the substance of the worship of his forefathers.

However superfluous this sacrifice may seem to this new-fashioned Christian, I must tell him, that his reformed mode of worship consisting, as it does, merely of public prayer and instruction, presents to

the mind of the Catholic, such a poor and barren religion, that he turns from it with interior disgust, pitying such vacant emptiness. The Protestant says, that Jesus Christ having once offered sacrifice for us on the cross, now intercedes for us in heaven—and that we sinners have prayer, and nothing but prayer to offer. This, I must observe, might be the language of the unbaptized, as well as of the Christian. Hence then may we not with truth call that a poor and barren religion, which cannot furnish us with the means of properly worshipping God? Prayer is *strictly* the religion of the criminal and the destitute;—not of the adopted child of grace, who has inherited the riches of heaven, as it has been our fortune by the regeneration of baptism. The Catholic, therefore, sees nothing but poverty, and emptiness, in the religion of the reformed;—whereas through the Christian sacrifice of the new law, he has the power to approach the throne of God, with an offering that must be always

acceptable to the Creator. He can thus pay him that homage which is worthy the God of the universe, and has the substance of a worship more holy than that of angels. *He* also may praise and beseech his Creator,—but what praises can give glory to God, like the sacrifice of his eternal Son? This is an eternal testimony of what was due to the justice of God for sin,—an eternal memorial of the reparation that has been made, and an act of worship in which the cherubim and quires descend from heaven to join.

Yes, my Brethren, take away the sacrifice of the mass, and you take away the essence and substance of the Christian religion. SACRIFICE CONSTITUTES THE RELIGION OF MAN, and where there is no sacrifice, there is no true religion—no proper worship of the Creator. Let me then entreat you, both Catholics and Protestants, by the value of your own souls, attentively to study this highly important mystery; let religion lead you to the sacred altar, let

faith enlighten your steps, and under the veil of earthly matter, there adore that victim, which was sacrificed for your increase of virtue here, and eternal glory hereafter.



SERMON XXXIX.

ON THE ESSENTIAL PART OF THE SACRIFICE OF THE MASS.

And whilst they were at supper Jesus took bread and blessed and broke ; and gave to his disciples and said ; take ye and eat ; this is my body.

And taking the chalice he gave thanks, and gave to them, saying ; drink ye all of this. For this is my blood of the New Testament which shall be shed for many unto remission of sins. (Matt. xxvi. 26, 27, 28.)

MY Brethren, in my last discourse I adverted to those strange and bewildered opinions which Protestants and others generally conceive respecting that great act of Catholic worship the hallowed sacrifice of the mass. And as I endeavoured, with no little pains, in that, and the preceding

instruction, clearly to shew you how it had been spoken of by the prophets, and prefigured by signs in the old law,—and having adduced in farther testimony, the writings of St. Paul, and exhausted myself in exertions to make you thoroughly comprehend what constitutes this most adorable sacrifice,—with the design of placing the mystery in a still more simple and distinct point of view, I will now undertake to shew what it is NOT ;—I will distinguish, in logical language, the substance from the accident,—separate the object from the dress, and present it to you in its original form of divine institution. Then that difference of religious principle in the Catholic and the Protestant will be found to be less in reality, than in appearance,—and it will be seen how similar and parallel are their essential forms of worship ;—and that the institution of the *breaking of bread* in communion, according to the rites of the established Church of England, has an undoubted relation to the *breaking of bread*,

according to a more ancient rite of the Catholic Church in the sacrifice of the mass. Infine, that conformably with their own principles, Protestants must contend, that in their reformation they have retained the substance of the worship, and only varied the form.

First then, I must inform you, that the essence of the sacrifice of the mass, does not consist, as is pretended, of the repetition of a set number of prayers in Latin or Greek, before an altar, ornamented with candles and a crucifix. The crucifix merely represents that oblation which Jesus Christ once made of himself, on Mount Calvary, and which under the signs of *bread* and *wine*, he was for ever to continue, in an unbloody manner, on the altars of his Church. It is not there placed for the purpose of adoration, but to explain and announce the mystery going forward. Certainly the image of Christ crucified should always be respectable to Christians; I do not mean that they should attach any ab-

solute consequence to a cross,—but to bear enmity towards that sacred emblem is apparently to betray a feeling decidedly anti-christian. *God forbid*, exclaims St. Paul, *that I should glory in any thing, but the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ.* (Gal. vi. 14.)

The use of lights moreover, as an appendage to religious worship, is a custom as ancient, perhaps, as the days of the apostles, since they are spoken of in the apostolic canons, and are frequently mentioned by St. John in the Apocalypse. *I saw*, he says, *in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks, one like to the Son of man.* (Apoc. i. 13.) There is not a greater folly than for men to be forward in censuring the manners and opinions of ages which have long passed. We should learn to tolerate others for the sake of ourselves, who have many habits to which we are attached, for which we should find it difficult to offer a good apology to posterity. It was usual then, in the ages we are speaking of, to burn lights in time of prayer, and the

Christians conformed to this practice as well as the Jews, under the two-fold persuasion, that it added to the splendour of religious pomp, and contributed to excite devotion in the soul. Light is an emblem of joy, and any one may be made sensible of the effect it produces on the mind, by attending to that vacancy so strikingly apparent when the lights are extinguished on our altars. I might also propose another explanation. In the beginning of the Church, this sacrifice was offered in the evening, about the hour of supper; (1 Cor. xi. 20.) persecution, however, soon obliged the Christians to defer this religious act, to the more quiet moments of midnight, or the dawn of day, when they assembled to prayer and sacrifice by the light of lamps. As Christianity therefore quietly settled, the hour was gradually transferred to a more seasonable time of the day;—however, the midnight practice of burning lights still continued, and became a part of the Christian religious service.

In the same manner we explain the adoption of a Latin and Greek liturgy. The world being originally converted to Christianity by those who spoke these tongues, they were employed in the service of the Church, because they were considered the most fixed, the most elegant, and the most generally known. The maintenance of uniformity and order, first led the pastors to adopt them, and the same principle has induced their successors to retain them to the present day. However as the liturgy of the Church has been translated into the vernacular language of almost every country, by these means the people have been enabled to understand the public prayers, while the Church has throughout maintained a dignified uniformity. It is unwise, therefore, for a Protestant, on entering a Catholic Church, to complain that he does not understand our liturgy.—Whose fault is it? He might as well complain that he does not understand the Hebrew or Greek BIBLE. An illiterate native of Ireland

might make a similar objection in an English meeting-house,—while an Englishman would be at liberty to repeat it in a Welch Protestant Church.

The great error of the Protestant is, that he conceives every one must understand the liturgy, in order to join in, or assist at mass. Because ignorant of the real nature of that religious rite, he views it no otherwise than as a set form of prayer; and being solely accustomed to this, in his own conventicles, can form no conception of any other species of worship. But the Catholic being differently instructed, is taught by his faith, that the mass is the peaceful sacrifice of the new law, and he enters the Church prepared for that oblation. Aware, that it is immaterial in what language God is addressed,—whether vocally, or from the heart, and being required by his religion to sanctify certain days,* by devoutly at-

* The days on which there is an obligation of hearing mass in this country are—

All the Sundays of the year.

The Circumcision of our Lord, - - Jan. 1.

The Epiphany, - - - - Jan. 6.

tending at this sacrifice,—he obeys the sacred ordonnance, and unites with the Church, in this solemn act of worship with equal benefit to himself, whether he give a special attention to the words of the priest at the altar, or retiring to some obscure corner, secretly bows down his whole soul in interior acts of adoration of God.

The mass is a religious rite, independent of our knowledge of language, in which all nations and tongues may bear a part,—at which the blind, the deaf, and the dumb are equally qualified to assist, as most strikingly appears in the more silent moments of the sacrifice, when every thought is occupied with God. Indeed, the circumstance complained of, is rather an advantage,—since the mind, less exposed to

The Annunciation of the Virgin Mary,	-	March 25.
SS. Peter and Paul,	- - - -	June 29.
The Assumption of the Virgin Mary,	-	Aug. 15.
All Saints,	- - - - -	Nov. 1.
The Nativity of our Lord,	- - -	Dec. 25.
Easter-Monday,	} moveable.	
Ascension of our Lord,		
Whit-Monday,		
Corpus Christi,		

that distraction which is occasioned by listening to another,—feels not that inconvenience so usually experienced in the newer forms of public prayer.—In the Protestant Churches and the dissenting conventicles, for instance, the minister only has the opportunity of praying, because the attention of the congregation, instead of being directed, as it ought, towards God, is wholly fixed on him; which must always be the case, when prayer is made *extempore*.

The vestments, moreover, used by the priest at the altar, form no part of the sacrifice;—they are the relics of early antiquity, have descended to us from generations long passed, and are revered by us because they were made venerable by them. To these ancient habiliments we otherwise attach no importance;—yet to hate religion on their account, to us appears, we confess, as absurd, as to hate a friend, on account of an old-fashioned costume. If religion is to be respected in her rites, by ordinary minds, these rites cannot be kept too

much distinguished from the other customs and actions of men. Our understandings are in general, so heavy and gross, that they require the assistance of the senses, to rise to any spiritual conception, and on this principle, I conceive Protestant ministers have thought proper to distinguish themselves from the community, by a clerical form of dress borrowed from the Catholic Church, and have done it no doubt with the view of drawing an accidental respect upon themselves ; for surely a grave costume cannot add any thing essential to their personal character. * Now to adopt the practice themselves, whilst they sternly reprobate the principle in others, is an inconsistency for which it becomes them to find an apology. Whether the Catholic priest be vested as tastily as some might require, is a question far beneath our notice, and may perhaps with greater pro-

* Witness especially the robes of the Protestant Bishops,—wrecks of the ancient cassock, surplice, and stole.

priety, be left for the decision of those, who make fashion and taste their primary concern. It may be proper however, to observe, that as the Mass is the mysterious commemoration of the *Lord's Supper*, so every thing in it, has either a reference to that act, or to the bloody passion of Jesus Christ. Thus the officiating Priest, representing the divine Priesthood of the atoning Messiah, comes forth like the new Melchisedech, bearing in his hands the instruments of sacrifice.*—Clothed in the white robe of innocence, † he also carries on his shoulders a heavier mantle, ‡ descriptive of the iniquities of mankind, on which is figured the blessed Cross, the dear instrument of our redemption; and whilst from his neck suspends the *stole* of priestly dignity, his loins are braced with the *girdle* of purity. Such, my Brethren, is the short and plain explanation of those vestments

* The paten and chalice.

† The alb.

‡ The chasuble.

used at the altar of sacrifice in the Catholic Church ;*—vestments, much resembling those which were prescribed by God to the Jewish priests, but which however, form no part of the sacrifice, any more than the mere robes of royalty form a part of government.

Neither does the Mass consist of a set of signs, of postures, or of gestures, such as making crosses, bowing the body, or bending the knee, which are all accidental and unessential to the mystery, and only employed in the way of ceremony. To ceremony in religion, some object, as many object to etiquette in civil society ; but surely no prudent man would lay such a stress upon this species of objection, as passionately to renounce his friend, because in his opinion he saluted him too often, and too formally. For, as the thing is indifferent in itself, so he would betray a weak mind, who should pertinaciously oppose what the

* See *Liturgy*, preface p. xvi. also Fleury, *Mœurs des Chret.* p. 291.

other only intended for the best. The end of public religion is impression ; and ceremony is necessary to effect it. On the how much, or the how little, however, of what is proper, men will always be divided, as they will ever differ about the splendour, and pageantry that should belong to a court ;—yet how absurd would it be, if one half of the community should quarrel with the other on a subject so trifling, and really hate a good government on the flimsy pretext of despising a gilded crown or a crimson throne ! Our motives for paying such regard to all the ceremonies of the Mass, are for the sake of greater decency, and because they have been regulated by very ancient ecclesiastical authority.

Now, if there be persons inclined to censure us on this account, with equal reason may they censure the divine authority, which regulated with so much precision the ceremonies of the Jewish religion. The original intention of the Church having been to excite in the soul, through the

senses, as great a respect as possible, for the action performing, it must be allowed by all, that her design so far was perfectly correct. Indeed she could not attach too much ceremony to the celebration of a mystery so sublime, as the one before us : and as Jesus Christ left every thing to be decided in this matter by his Church, she conceived, that although it is only by signs that any impression can be made upon the mind of man, yet that nevertheless these may vary with the circumstances of times ; and it must be evident to all that these signs and ceremonies were much more particularly necessary, at the beginning of Christianity, in directing the ideas of Pagans towards religion, than they are at present, in leading understandings familiarized with what is spiritual. They undoubtedly proved at that period a great assistance to those, who could not read, and perhaps only imperfectly comprehend. Thus every inflection of the knee reminded these persons

that they were to bow down their hearts before their Creator ;—every sign of the Cross, was an admonition that we must worship the eternal Father through the crucified Son.* We are willing to admit that a good deal of ancient style and fashion pervades these rites and ceremonies of the Church, as there naturally should be ;—for it must be observed that SHE, who employs them, is a matron of very ancient date, and ill would it become her dignified gravity, to copy the more airy manners of worldly fashion and youthful levity.

Neither does the sacrifice consist in the recital or chaunt of particular prayers,

* During Mass in the Russian Greek schismatic church, the congregation continues in a standing posture the whole time, without any book or other object, such as *beads*, to assist the attention ; and are incessantly employed in making immense signs of the cross upon their bodies, joined with very low inclinations of the head. Their liturgy is also composed in the ancient Slavonic, at present a dead language, not understood by the people. The ceremonies of the *Greek* have always been much more numerous than those employed in the *Latin* church.

hymns, and anthems,—nor in the offering of bread and wine, at the offertory, which is only explicative of the priest's intention,—nor in the elevation and adoration of the sacred species, accompanied with the burning of incense.*—But, hear, and be confounded ye Protestants at your prejudices,—it is in doing what ye pretend to do yourselves ;—it is essentially in the simple action recorded in my text, and, with the exception of three words of *apostolical tradition*, introduced into the communion rite of the Church of England. Hence, with the exception of these words, we

* A most learned and interesting work has been published by LE BRUN, entitled *A literal, historical, and dogmatical explanation of the prayers and ceremonies of the Mass, according to ancient authors, and the evidence afforded by the different churches of the Christian world*. This work is universally considered a masterly production, replete with useful erudition.—A most excellent series of moral instructions also upon the same mystery, and its ceremonies and prayers, has been translated from the French of Mons. Cochin, and published in English by Mr. Walter. While the former work is chiefly designed for the learned, the latter will edify and instruct the most simple.

can read to you the real *form* of the Catholic Mass, out of the Protestant Liturgy, or the Common Prayer-Book of the Church of England, which runs as follows:—

“OUR SAVIOUR JESUS CHRIST, IN THE SAME NIGHT THAT HE WAS BETRAYED, TOOK BREAD, AND WHEN HE HAD GIVEN THANKS, HE BRAKE IT, AND GAVE IT TO HIS DISCIPLES, SAYING, TAKE, EAT, THIS IS MY BODY, WHICH IS GIVEN FOR YOU: DO THIS IN REMEMBRANCE OF ME. LIKEWISE AFTER SUPPER HE TOOK THE CUP; AND WHEN HE HAD GIVEN THANKS HE GAVE IT TO THEM, SAYING, DRINK YE ALL OF THIS; FOR THIS IS MY BLOOD OF THE NEW TESTAMENT, WHICH IS SHED FOR YOU, AND FOR MANY, FOR THE REMISSION OF SINS; DO THIS, AS OFT AS YE SHALL DRINK IT, IN REMEMBRANCE OF ME.”

Thus every priest, whether Protestant or Catholic, who being duly ordained, shall celebrate the *Lord's Supper* in this manner, will really celebrate the adorable sacrifice

of the *Mass*, according to every *essential* rite of the Church of Rome.* I know not how many of the dissenting sects adopt this sacramental form of communion of the established Church ;—but the Methodists, and some others, should beware how they express themselves, in future, against the Catholic Sacrifice of the Mass, unless they directly intend to censure one of the rites of their own religion. For, as I have already observed, the action is the *breaking*

* This position I can confirm by an extraordinary fact, related by the ancient historian Eusebius: “When St. Lucian,” he says, “a Catholic Priest, was confined in prison in Nicomedia, under the cruel persecution of Dioclesian, whilst lying bound down to the earth, the afflicted Christians came about him, lamenting that on the solemn festival of the Epiphany which it then happened to be, they had it not in their power, either to assist at the sacred rites, or to communicate. At which pouring forth in true piety a flood of tears, he requested that the sacred symbols might be placed on his bare breast glowing with divine love, and using it as an altar, he celebrated the divine mystery, and after consecration, and the recital of solemn prayer, he communicated himself, and the faithful about him.” (*Ecc. Hist. l. 8. c. 13. et l. 9. v. c.*)

of bread,* common to all, and exteriorly only varies in the mode ;—we performing it with *more* pomp and ceremony, they with *less*.

However, it cannot be denied by the reformist that there is something singularly impressive in the ceremonies of the Catholic Church, and that the rites of Protestants are cold and languid, in comparison to ours. I know from their own admission that they feel the difference, and

* Fenelon, in his Letter on *Frequent Communion*, speaking of the eucharistic mysteries of the *Lord's Supper*, synonymously styles it *breaking of bread*. See the Letter quoted in *Sermon xxxiv.*—It may be asked why communion is only received fasting in the Catholic Church, and why *water* is mixed with the *wine* as *matter* for the eucharist? Both these practices rest upon apostolical tradition; that is, we have no trace of any subsequent origin. St. Justin the Martyr, in his *Apol. 2.* writes of *the oblation of the bread and wine and the water.*—Tertullian likewise mentions the receiving communion *before all other food.* (L. 2. ad Uxor. c. 5.) As these fathers therefore lived in immediate succession from the apostles, they are evidences of the practice of that age; which having been perpetuated by the Church, is frequently styled, an *apostolical tradition*.

have reason to believe that no Protestant enters a Catholic Church without being struck with religious awe at the solemnity of our worship, especially whilst this hallowed sacrifice is offering.* Holy I will

* It is difficult to conceive any thing more sublimely grand, than the solemn service of high mass in the Catholic Church. Whatever dignity is to be found in the forms of religious ceremony,—the rich colours of dress, the majesty of sacred music, the characters of the officiants, and the numbers assembled,—is there thrown into the scale of effect, and combined with the sanctity of the place, and the awfulness of the mysteries operated, raise sensations in the soul which have no parallel in nature. The very spectacle of a venerable priest of Jesus Christ, holding in his hands the offering of the new law—and, beneath the towering columns of some ancient cathedral, raising it to heaven in the sight of prostrate multitudes, is a scene that would overcome savage obduracy, and force it to confess the greatness of the God of heaven. It is related of the iniquitous Bolingbroke, whilst attending at high mass in the Royal Chapel at Versailles, as it was sung in the presence of the king, that struck with the majesty of the rite, he exclaimed, “If I were King of France, I would always perform this ceremony myself.” See *Wharton’s Essay on Pope*, i. 325. Wharton himself also says, “I believe few persons have ever been present at the celebrating of mass in a good

allow religion to be in all her rites ; but when the Christian beholds the minister of

choir, but have been affected with awe, if not with devotion." Mr. Eustace, in the 1st volume of his *Classical Tour through Italy*, has published a short account of the ceremonies of the pontifical mass of the Pope, which varies little from the pontifical mass of any other latin Bishop of the Church. Nightingale also, in his *Portraiture of the Catholic Religion*, has given a description of the prayers and ceremonies of the mass, which I believe is no otherwise incorrect, than in as much as it absolutely fixes a reference between each ceremony, and some particular circumstance in the passion of Christ ; whereas their relation is general.

Whilst the pontifical mass and the ordinary high mass, are thus distinguished by the very splendid service in which the *mystery* is arrayed (and this is the only distinction of *high* and *low* mass) the low mass presents a more private form of the sacrifice, combining dignity, utility, and brevity. After the priest, clothed in his proper vestments, has placed upon the altar the sacred vessels containing the *matter* for the sacrifice,—and has directed to God his intention, he descends to the lowest step, makes upon himself the sign of the cross, in testimony of the sacrifice he is going to commemorate, and immediately recollecting that he is only a creature of the Almighty, and an impure sinner before heaven and earth, he humbles himself in the presence of his Creator and the whole court of heaven, loudly confessing his guilt, and imploring mercy of Jesus Christ through the intercession of his blessed Mo-

Jesus Christ, in his priestly robes, raising the sacred Host, in the sight of angels

ther, the archangel Michael, the Baptist, the holy Apostles, and all the other saints.

Then ascending to the altar, he kisses it, and calls upon God to look with complacency on the *relics* of his martyrs, there deposited as the fittest throne for his divine Son upon earth. Animated with the fire of the Royal Prophet, he next approaches the *book*, and opens the Church-office with the psalm marked for the service of the day; after which, again conscious of his own guilt, he repeatedly with his assistants calls on Jesus Christ for mercy, in the Greek liturgy, *Kyrie eleison*, when he breaks into a hymn of praise and exultation in the *Gloria in excelsis*, and honours the incarnate Son seated on the right hand of the Father. He then kisses the altar, and turning to the people salutes them in the words of peace—*The Lord be with you*, and immediately proceeds to read the *Collect*, according to the ancient custom, with extended hands. In this short prayer he implores the blessings of God upon the people,—and presents to them the example of the saints, as a pattern of virtue they are called to follow; in conclusion always reposing on the infinite merits of Jesus Christ. He next reads aloud the lesson called the *Epistle* marked for the day, while the people are supposed to be attentive to the instruction it contains; after which he again offers his praises to the Almighty in some of the versicles of the Royal Prophet, and at the centre of the altar in a secret prayer begs of God to purify his heart and lips for an-

and of men,—when he sees the smoking incense ascend to him who sitteth on a throne

nouncing his gospel to the people; which he reads to them standing, as prescribed in the office of the day. He then declares by the *Credo* his faith in God and all his great works, especially that of our redemption by his Son Jesus Christ. After which he again turns to the people, and salutes them as before in the language of peace, *the Lord be with you*. He next prepares for the sacrifice he is about to offer, by a short prayer, in which he makes an entire *oblation of himself, and all he has to God*, and declares his *willingness to do and suffer whatever he commands*. Then uncovering the paten and the chalice, he makes the offertory of the *bread and wine*, praying that the *unspotted host and the chalice of salvation may ascend before the divine Majesty as a sweet odour, and be available to all faithful Christians both living and dead*. Then to express how necessary purity of heart is to those who are desirous of offering an acceptable sacrifice to God, he washes his fingers, repeating at the same time the psalm of David, *I will wash my hands among the innocent*. Then inclining over the center of the altar, he makes in secret a solemn address to the Trinity, commemorating likewise the Mother of Jesus Christ, his holy Precursor the Baptist, his holy apostles Peter and Paul, and all the Saints, and begs their united intercessions. He also turns to the people, and desires his brethren in Christ, *to pray with him, that their common sacrifice may be to the praise and glory of God's name, their own benefit and that of the whole Church*. Having offered

above dominations and powers,—when he hears the sound of music, and at the same

this prayer in secret, (hence called the *Secret*) he then proceeds to praise and return thanks to God, and with the angels and cherubim, bowing before the throne of heaven, he repeats the hymn, *Holy, Holy, Holy is the Lord God: Hosannah in the highest.*

Then commencing what is termed the Canon of the Mass, from its constituting the more sacred part, he secretly recites a series of prayers in which he first raises his hands to heaven in token of supplication, then kisses the altar, which is so soon to bear upon it the Saviour of the world,—and repeatedly blesses the elements with the sign of the Cross, in reference to the bloody sacrifice they are destined to commemorate; after which he lays a special stress upon the particular wants of those who assist in offering the sacrifice, and prays that *for them and their families and friends, for the redemption of their souls, for the health and salvation they hope for, God will approve, ratify, and accept the oblation, and make it the BODY and BLOOD of his most beloved Son Jesus Christ!* Then pronouncing the scriptural words of consecration over the elements, he kneels, adores, and elevates the *Host* and the *Chalice*,—declaring that it is *done in remembrance of Christ and his blessed passion, resurrection and ascension into heaven.* He also alludes to the acceptable gifts of Abel, the holocaust of Abraham, and the holy sacrifice and unspotted victim of Melchisedech; and beseeches the Almighty, that the victim before him may be placed by the hands of angels on the altar of

instant every quarter to re-echo with exclamations of *Hosanna to the Son of David,*

heaven, in the sight of the divine Majesty for the benefit of the living and the dead, and *that all who partake of it may be filled with every grace and blessing.*

He likewise prays, that through the intercession of the Apostles, Martyrs, Virgins, and all the Saints, a plenary release of all penal satisfaction may be extended to himself, and the people, *not in consideration of any merits of theirs, but by the gratuitous pardon of God, through the merits of Jesus Christ.* He then thrice blesses with the sign of the cross, the consecrated chalice with the sacred host, in token that all the excellence of this oblation is derived from the sacrifice of Calvary; and that equal honour is due to each of the three divine Persons of the sacred Trinity who equally contributed to effect it. After this, in the person of Christ, and as the Mediator between God and his people, with uplifted hands, he recites the divine prayer *Our Father*, and once more implores the intercession of the glorious Virgin, Mother of God, and the other Saints, that he and his whole flock may be *protected from sin, and continue secure from all disturbance, through the same Jesus Christ.* He next *breaks the bread*, in testimony of the separation of Christ's body and soul in death—and then puts a part of the host into the chalice, thereby shewing their subsequent re-union for ever at his resurrection. After this he directly addresses himself to Jesus Christ, as the *Lamb of God, that takes away the sins of the*

blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord, Hosanna in the highest, his mind is impelled to acts of fervent adoration, and

world, entreating mercy and peace for himself and the whole Church, and prepares to complete the holocaust he is offering, by consuming the victim in communion. Yet, first he calls upon the name of the Lord, and thrice avows to him his unworthiness, saying, Lord, I am not worthy. Receiving the sacred species, he says, may the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ preserve my soul to everlasting life, and if there be others to communicate, he distributes the victim till they all have eaten. He then prays that the temporal gift may become an eternal remedy, and that having received the body and blood of the Lord, no stain of sin may remain in him, and that all who have been present at the mystery may find the benefit of it in their souls. He then again turns to the people with the former words of peace, recites aloud a short prayer of thanksgiving, and once more assuring them that the Lord is with them,—he dismisses the congregation. He then makes a prayer for them as they are preparing to depart,—once more kisses the altar, on which he had immolated the unspotted victim of the world, and formally invokes upon the assembly the benediction of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. The Liturgical office of the Church then terminates with a passage from the first chapter of St. John's Gospel, and the priest bears the sacred vessels from the altar, as he carried them to it.

truly he may be said to be without a soul, who can then remain without religion. Talk not of the misapplication of ceremony,—can there be any more adapted to impress on the soul the faith of the Church? Here religion exerts all her powers;—by this single act, thousands have been induced to confess the mystery, and thousands will yet witness it to own the same impression.

Do not think however, my Friends, that I am attempting to force from you an approbation of these, or any other ceremonies. As ceremonies, and distinguished from religion, they are like the customs of the age, open to universal, but respectful criticism.—I merely offer, in apology, the sentiments of an individual exercising this privilege, and lay before you the reasons which have so long justified their use, in the judgments of Catholics. They appear to me efficaciously to assist in impressing the mind with a great reverence for the mysteries of the Christian religion,

—elevate the soul to sublime conceptions, and add a sensible and dignified solemnity to our worship. Yet I am not wedded to them by an eternal attachment ;—and whenever due authority should prescribe an alteration of ceremony and diminution of pomp, (an event no ways probable) as an individual, I should be found ready to concur in that change of discipline.

It has been asked by many, in what originated that love of ceremony so discernible throughout the Catholic Church ? Did it take its rise in superstition ? No ! rather in the endeavour to suppress it. It must be observed, that the Christian religion was first established on the ruins of idolatry, in the nations of the east and the south, and that it was not till some centuries after, that the nations of the north were converted by preachers, sent from those countries, where the gospel had first received a settlement. It must moreover be observed that in the warm climates of the east and of the south, the peo-

ple manifest a striking predilection for parade ; it enters into all their actions and ideas, and through the history of the world, they have ever been remarked for richness of dress, superfluity of ceremony, and lively sensations. Every expression of thought is accompanied by signs and gestures, and their forms of society appear unaccountably strange to the more sedate inhabitant of the north.

Religion, therefore, in settling among these nations, adopted much of their style in ceremony and dress,—her manners were formed from theirs, and the pastors who originally brought religion from those countries, with it also brought those forms, in which it had been established amongst them.* It is not wonderful then, that they

* The very reason that induces Protestants to discard the ancient ceremonies of the Catholic Church, attaches Catholics strongly to them. "Among ignorant nations," writes Dr. Johnson, "ceremony is the preservative of tradition. Since Protestantism was extended to the savage

should appear strange to the plain understandings of northern nations; but to ascribe them to superstition, only serves to betray the prejudice of ignorance. In the rites of the Catholic Greek Church, the ceremonies are not the same as in the Latin, yet we do not object to their religion because they express it in a different manner, or with more Asiatic pomp. Nothing is more usual moreover than to hear Protestants and others expressing their high esteem for the Common Prayer Book of the Church of England, and for the men whose talents enabled them to produce such a work. Justice then and truth require me to say, that the ground-work is Ca-

parts of Scotland, it has perhaps been one of the chief labours of the ministers to abolish stated observances, because they continued the remembrance of the former religion." (*Journey to the Western Islands.*) "Bishop Hooper in a court sermon in the year 1550 suggested, that the government would do well to turn the *altars* into *tables*; for as long as the altars continued, both ignorant people and ignorant priests would always dream of a sacrifice." (*Heylin's Hist. Reform.*) Such is often the importance of a word!!

tholic, and as the prayers, collects, with the selection of gospels and epistles, are chiefly borrowed from the Roman Missal and Manuals of the old religion, all the excellence the Common Prayer Book possesses, is our own.

In conclusion, I have only to remark, that what you have heard this day, should convince every Protestant of the necessity of coolly and temperately reviewing those sacred rites, which once formed the cherished religion of their ancestors. The instructed Catholic venerates his religion, because understanding it, he sees it to be pure, good, and holy ; whilst on the other hand the Protestant condemns it, because by him it is misunderstood. Rejecting those means which gave instruction to his forefathers, and depending on his own ideas, he rashly judges, and judges falsely on a matter of the highest import to his immortal soul. Thus the fair name of religion is blasted, the honour of God insulted, and virtue put to shame. Error

may be excused, but wilful error must expect the wages of sheer justice. From which may God in his goodness protect you.



SERMON XL.

ON THE TRADITIONAL EVIDENCES OF THE
SACRIFICE OF THE NEW LAW IN THE
LORD'S SUPPER.

*Therefore Brethren stand fast ; and hold
the traditions which you have learned,
whether by word, or by our epistle.
(2 Thess. ii. 14.)*

WHILST the Protestant Christian is busily employed in combating the arguments, on which the Catholic grounds his faith in the real presence of Jesus Christ in the Sacrament of the Altar,—it is highly amusing to observe the arch attention of the Socinian reformist, who, watching his moment, approaches the disputants and hails his friend and brother Protestant, saying ; “Thou hast reasoned well, against the Catholic having urged the very arguments that I intended to employ

against thee.* For as there is no small difference of faith between us, no other than that thou believest Jesus Christ to

* The Protestant reasons against transubstantiation in this manner, "I deny the Sacrament of the Altar to be the body and blood of Jesus Christ, first, because the mystery is repugnant to reason, and impossible.—2dly, Because the sacrament is styled, *bread in scripture*, and whenever it is honoured with the appellations of *flesh and blood of Jesus Christ, or body of our Lord*, these words are to be taken in a *figurative* sense; as when he is there called a *vine*, a *door*, a *rock*.—3dly, I deny the mystery, because it would argue either a division or a multiplication of Christ. For if the whole of Christ is in the *bread*, then there is no Christ where there is no *bread*,—or there must ensue a division of Christ.—4thly, I deny it, because it directly leads to idolatrous worship, and disposes the mind to adore the created image instead of the Creator, which would be in violation of the 2d commandment.—5thly, I deny it, because if Christians ought to believe that the *body* and *blood* of Jesus Christ are substantially present in the sacrament, it would be in contradiction to the evidence of their senses, and the immutable laws of nature. They know how the host is made and prepared. There is nothing in it to distinguish it from common bread.—God would have forgotten what he owed to his own dignity, had he condescended to wrap himself up in *bread* and *wine*. Infine, it is an idolatrous superstition unknown before the Popish Council of Lateran."

have been true God, whilst I regard him as a mere man, with thy leave, we will now discuss this question in the presence of the persons here assembled. I deny Jesus Christ to be true God ; 1st, Because the mystery is repugnant to reason, and impossible. 2dly, Because Jesus Christ is styled man in scripture, and whenever he is there honoured with the appellation of a divine person, or Son of God, these words are to be taken in a *figurative* sense, as when he is there called a *vine*, a *door*, a *rock*. 3dly, I deny the mystery, because it would argue either a division, or a multiplication of God.—For if the whole of God be Christ, then there would be no God, where there is no Christ; or there must ensue a division of God. 4thly, I deny it, because if the Jews and others ought to have believed that Jesus Christ was God, it would have been in contradiction to the evidence of their senses, and the immutable laws of nature. They knew

his mother, and all his family,—there was nothing in the Infant Jesus, to distinguish him from other infants. God would have forgotten what he owed to his own divine dignity, had he condescended to wrap himself up in human flesh. Infine, it is an idolatrous superstition unknown before the Popish Council of Nice. These are my reasons for denying the mystery, and they must prove conclusive to thy judgment, since they are the very same that thou hast urged so properly against the Catholic, on the similar question of the real presence of Jesus Christ in the sacrament of the *Lord's Supper*. Only substitute the terms bread and wine, for human nature, and thou wilt perceive that they are the very arguments which fell from thy own lips."

The Protestant not expecting to be thus assailed on both quarters, and beholding himself between two enemies, finds it necessary for his own defence, immediately to shift his ground, and bears down

upon the Socinian from those very battlements, from which he had attempted to dislodge the Catholic. He quotes the councils, appeals to the consent of all nations and ages—instances the clear language of scripture, and rejects all private interpretation. “Ah! Friend,” exclaims the astonished Catholic, “on what side have you placed yourself? But a moment ago you protested against the authorities to which you now appeal, as to your own rule of faith. Why then you are at once both Catholic and Protestant! You *blow hot and cold* in the same breath! As opposite in your principles as the poles—at one time you build up with a deal of noisy exultation, what the next moment the mere presence of the Socinian compels you to destroy with your own hands.”

Such is the double game, which the Church of England Protestant is forced to play, and which forms the strongest possible proof of the fallacy of those principles, which direct him in his opposition to Catholic

doctrine.* It shall be our business, therefore, this day, to meet him on one of these

* I may here transcribe from my second Letter to Dr. Marsh, an anecdote of a Protestant Clergyman at Paris, whilst viewing that metropolis in company with a Catholic Priest, and a Dissenting Minister. As the party "visited the different churches, and paid a particular attention to all the forms and ceremonies of the national religion, freely expressing their opinions upon every point, the Church of England Clergyman was perpetually engaged in supporting either the arguments of the Catholic Priest, or those of the Dissenting Minister. When the propriety of a liturgy, ritual observances, or ecclesiastical institutions, and the sinfulness of schism and heresy were discussed, the Church of England Protestant immediately dressed himself out in the full livery of the Catholic Priest, and argued most earnestly against the simplifying doctrine of the Dissenter. But as soon as the Dissenter began to maintain the right of private judgment in matters of faith, and the sufficiency of the scriptures,—as soon as he began to inveigh against the Bishop of Rome, the authority of the Church, and her ecumenical decrees, he immediately stood up in support of the Dissenter's arguments, and contended that as they were two to one, the Catholic Priest was in the minority, and therefore he ought to surrender at discretion. As the conversation, however, was carried on with that freedom and good humour which should distinguish all religious controversies, the Catholic Priest and the Dissenting Minister, knowing the consistency of their own principles, and seeing at the same time the

points of defence, the universal consent of nations; and to shew that, as he has instanced this as a proof of the divinity of Jesus Christ, against the Socinians, so by the same rule, and on the same principle, he ought to admit the mystery of the real presence of Jesus Christ in the sacrament of the altar.

It is laid down as a fundamental maxim in the Catholic Church, that no new article of divine faith can be *formed*; consequently, that the *whole*, and *every part* of her doctrine, must have been the very revelation of Jesus Christ to his apostles. It

inconsistency of those professed by the Clergyman of the Establishment, observed to him, "We acknowledge, Sir, that you have shewn much courage in this controversial contest, but you have fought on both sides, and *you* have fought with weapons which were not your *own*.—Have you then, none to arm yourself with, which are properly *yours*?" "None!!!" "Really then you are to be pitied; for what would you do in your defence, if we both should come against you, clad in the armour of those very arguments in which you conceive yourself victorious? Unarmed and defenceless, you would be under the necessity of surrendering to one or the other."

will, therefore, be expected that in tracing back the present faith of the Church to that period, we prove, by a regular succession of testimony and authority, that such doctrine has had no beginning since the time of the apostles, who of course received it from Jesus Christ. Protestants it should be observed, are extremely divided among themselves about the period at which they conceive, they ought to fix the introduction into the Church of the sacrifice of the Mass, together with the doctrine of the real presence of Jesus Christ in the *Lord's Supper*. We will therefore prove this day, that such has been the *universal* Christian faith of *all* ages and *all* nations up to the very days of the apostles, and that the *formal Protestant* reformist stands *single* against the whole Christian world. *I have no pleasure in you*, said prophetically the Lord of Hosts to the Jewish Priests, and *I will not accept a gift from your hand; for from the rising to the setting sun, my name is great among the*

Gentiles, and in every place there is sacrifice, and there is offered to my name a clean offering. (Mal. i. 10, 11.)

My Brethren, there are some events, in their accomplishments so strikingly grand, that the mind, whilst contemplating them, is absorbed in admiration, and the soul silently adores that omnipotence which rules the moral as well as the physical world. At the period when Christianity began to spread over the nations of the earth, the idolatries of paganism were universally preached in every country, with the exception of Judea, and heathenish sacrifices to the gods, were offered in every temple of the civilized world. Rome and the cities of Greece vied with each other in the multitudes of their victims—the Cæsars marched to battle and to victory, under the auspices of bleeding holocausts, and the pestiferous incense of these pagan sacrifices signalized the successive triumphs of their legions over the defeated enemies of their country. This iniquitous

religion was woven into every social and domestic habit,—became an essential part of their civil constitution,—entered decidedly into all their festivities, games and entertainments, and engaged the descriptive talents of their best poets, sculptors, and writers. Public edifices, which were equally the ornament of their towns, and the admiration of strangers, were consecrated to this worship,—in them idolatry was enshrined in gold and marble, and posterity still look upon their ruined magnificence with mixt feelings of wonder and confusion.

Such was the aspect which religion wore in the far stretched empires of Greece and Rome, and such were the hideous forms under which in every other part it existed, saving Judea. Even in the remote recesses of the savage MONA the druidical sacrifices to the pagan deities were offered with solemn pomp, and from the extremities of Britain to the further limits of Persia, the incense of idolatrous holo-

causts incessantly rose in clouds to mock the Eternal. The temple of Jerusalem was the only sanctuary of the living God, unpolluted by these victims, and where a true yet imperfect worship was paid to him.

It would be reasonable then, in these circumstances of religion, to suppose, that the Deity would have cherished that spot, and caressed that priesthood, which still continued faithful in retaining his law;—and that to subvert this worship would endanger the very existence of true religion upon earth. In these very circumstances, however, the Deity, who only judges by the strength of his omnipotence, declares, notwithstanding, that he has *no pleasure* in the priesthood of Israel, and that the Jewish sacrifices shall be succeeded by another, which shall be *offered to him from the rising to the setting sun*, in every part of the world;—that of the splendid temple of Jerusalem, *not a stone shall be left upon a stone*—(Luke xix. 44.); nay that this very people shall be dispersed

like dust before the wind, without sacrifice and without altar, (*Osee* iii. 4.) an eternal monument of his divine indignation!

My Brethren, such was the picture of religion which the world presented at the birth of Christianity:—yet ere three centuries had scarcely run their course, the whole machinery of paganism gave way,—the Cæsars embraced the Gospel of Jesus, and the eucharistic sacrifice of the new law was offered in every part of the known world where man was found or God adored. It was offered on the ruins of those very altars, and in those very sanctuaries which had been consecrated to the worship of graven deities,—it was offered in the palaces of Greece and Rome, and in the forests of Gaul,—in the courts of Antioch, and in the deserts of Egypt. *For the name of the Lord of Hosts, had become great among the Gentiles, from the rising to the setting sun; and in every place there was sacrifice, and there was offered to his name a clean offering.*

Surely then in the total abolition of the idolatrous sacrifices of the Gentiles and the universal substitution of the sacrifice of the Mass, we may discover the finger of God directing the work of religion, and realizing his eternal decrees. For to what other cause can we attribute so striking a revolution in the moral world, to which is even wanting the common circumstance of a *relapse*? For although the Israelites in like manner had often been withdrawn by the Deity from the superstitions of idolatry—yet often did they relapse. Complete triumph was exclusively reserved for the religion of Jesus.

My Friends, in taking a view of the world, name to me that spot since the destruction of the temple and city of Jerusalem (which followed the death of Christ) in which a legalized priest of Israel has offered sacrifice to God; and tell me, that land, in which the converted Gentile nations, have not successively worshipped him, with the eucharistic sacrifice of the

Mass. Examine every province of Europe, Asia, Africa, and America, and see if there be a city which has not been sanctified with this *clean offering*. In the imperial cities of Petersburgh and Constantinople, where the predominant religion is at present anti-catholic, we behold at this very day, this sacrifice offering on every Christian Altar. Pass into Egypt, and the remotest parts of Syria, and on the altars of those churches which have ceased to be Catholic above thirteen hundred years, you will observe the sacrifice of the Cross still continued under the eucharistic signs of *bread and wine*. As therefore the priests of these sects continue to administer according to the same essential form as the Church of Rome, this sacrifice is truly *offered from the rising to the setting sun*, in every country beneath the heavens, where the name of Christ has spread; and it should be remarked that at the period of the reformation, there did not exist a Christian people, whose religion it did not

constitute.—*In every place there is sacrifice and a clean offering to my name, saith the Lord of Hosts.*

It is against this universal faith of nations, therefore, that the reformist is compelled to stand, when he dares to reject the mysterious sacrifice of the Mass.—It is in opposition to the Russian Schismatic-Greek,—the Nestorian,—the Eutychian,—the Copt,—the Jacobite,—who with one accord, have come forward in support of this article of Christian faith, that the Protestant protests against it. I ask not any Protestant however to bow to my authority,—let him consult the respective Liturgies of these Christians, and he will therein find evidence of proof.—There he will discover, that the Liturgy of the reformist, in as much as it omits this sacrifice, forms a single exception to every Liturgy that exists, or has existed in the whole Christian world. He will discover, that denying, as he does, a perpetual oblation in the new law, he bears no resemblance to other Christians, who,

however they may differ among themselves on some speculative points of faith, on this practical question are all agreed.—And not to leave you, my Friends, with a bare assertion, I will produce for you a proof in the very words of some of these Christians.

In a formal exposition of faith, delivered by a Moscovite Greek of high rank, to the French Ambassador at the court of Sweden, in the year 1667, we read the following declaration* on this subject. 1st, “We believe that the most pure body and the most precious blood of our Saviour Jesus Christ, are truly, really, and substantially contained under the species of bread and wine, the body in the bread, the blood in the wine without separation. 2dly, We believe *that the body and blood of our Lord ought to be adored in the divine Liturgy, with the worship of LATRIA*, † as well exteriorly as interiorly. 3dly, We believe that the oblation of this mystery is a most true

* See Perpet. de la Foi, vol. ii. p. 302.

† Divine homage.

and most proper sacrifice of the New Testament ; by which God is rendered propitious to the living and to the dead. It is on this account that our Church sings, behold the mystic sacrifice is completed ;— and when the Greeks communicate, each one repeats with great faith and with great confidence, the prayer of our most holy father St. John Chrysostom ; *I believe, oh Lord ! and I confess that you are the Christ, the Son of the living God, who came into this world to save sinners, of whom I am the greatest. I believe likewise that what I see, is your most pure body, and that your most pure blood is also there.* In short we affirm, that all the members of the Eastern Church, not only the GREEKS, but the Lithuanians, the Moscovites, the Moldavians, the Wallachians, the Georgians, the Mingrelians, the Circassiens, the Arabs, and an infinite number of others, although the Russians and the others do not use the Greek tongue, nevertheless believe, all with one accord, that this mystery is the

from the apostles. Fourthly, that the

body and blood of the Lord.”—This document with many others, may be seen attested in that famous work entitled, *The Perpetuity of the Faith of the Catholic Church*.

I shall select but one more, a formal instrument signed by seven Archbishops of the Eastern Church, which begins thus. “* Those ineffectually look for truth, who do not seek it through the channels of the gospel. Determined to find it by the mere light of reason, and a vain philosophy, they naturally remove themselves from the object proposed, and lose themselves in the midst of precipices, among which they endeavour to entangle their brethren. Such is the behaviour of the Calvinists in France; who puffed up with vanity and effrontery, impudently calumniate our Eastern Church, and rashly impute to her the grossest falsehoods; publishing every where that she accords with their sentiments, and approves their fanciful opi-

* See *Perpet. de la Foi*, vol. iii. p. 411.

nions ; although at the same time their absurd and extraordinary doctrine, on the sacrament of the Eucharist, and some other points, has been condemned and rejected as erroneous and unknown to the Eastern Church, by particular councils assembled at Constantinople.—Wherefore on the holy sacrament of the Eucharist we say, first, that the living body of Jesus Christ, who was crucified, who ascended into heaven, and who sitteth at the right hand of the Father, is truly present in the eucharist, yet invisibly. Secondly, that the bread and wine after the invocation of the priest, and after the consecration, are changed from their proper substance, into the true body and blood of Jesus Christ ; and that although the accidents which remain, are those of bread and wine, they are nevertheless neither bread nor wine. Thirdly, That the eucharist is a sacrifice for the living and the dead, established by Jesus Christ, and which we have received by tradition from the apostles. Fourthly, that the

body of Jesus Christ in the eucharist is eaten wholly, entirely and impassibly by those who receive it,—whether they be worthy or unworthy; the worthy receive it to their salvation, the unworthy to their condemnation; moreover that it is sacrificed without the effusion of blood, and truly adored as God.”

I might also add, if I had time, the declarations of the Nestorian Churches of Is-pahan and Cis, signed by the patriarchs and their clergy, and transmitted in form, through the medium of the French Ambassador, to Lewis the Fourteenth of France. And as they are to the same effect as the others, you will please to observe, that these are not only evidences of the universality of the modern faith of the Church, on these points, but moreover shew, that her ancient faith in the fifth century was the same. For it was about the year 431 that the sect of Nestorianism was established, or that the Nestorians separated from the Catholic Church. Either, there-

fore, they carried with them out of the Church of Rome the doctrine of the mass and real presence, or they adopted it afterwards. But it would be easy to shew, that such hatred and animosity have always been manifested by the Nestorians towards the Catholics, that it becomes absolutely incredible, that they either would or could have learnt it from them;—consequently it must have been professed by the Church before the birth of Nestorianism, which is one of those points, I have undertaken to prove. For which purpose I shall now produce the testimony of several of those fathers, who lived and wrote within the four first centuries of the Christian Church.*

* See the important quotation from St. James of Nisibæ, p. 145; and consulting Rev. Mr. Berington's excellent work the Faith of Catholics, p. 250, the reader will also find the following evidences collected by him. *St. Clement of Rome* writes: "Whatever God has commanded to be done at stated times, that we must perform in regular order: thus must our offerings be made, and other public functions exercised; not inconsiderately, and without order, but, as it was ordained, at

St. Clement, a Latin Father, who lived in the very first century of the Christian

stated times and hours. They, therefore, who, in this manner present their offerings, are acceptable to the Lord, and blessed; for following his commandments, they do not go astray." Ep. 1. ad Cor. n. 40. t. 1. PP. Apost. p. 170.

St. Justin. "Inflamed by the word of his calling, as it were, by fire, truly we are the sacerdotal offspring of God; as he himself attests, saying, that, in every place among the nations, we offer to him well pleasing and clean victims. These victims he accepts from his own priests alone. Wherefore, shewing preference to all those, who, through his name, offer the sacrifice, which Christ ordained to be offered, that is, in the Eucharist of bread and the chalice, which in all places of the earth are celebrated by the Christian people, God declares, that they are well pleasing to him. But the sacrifices of you Jews and of your priests he rejects, saying; *I will accept no offering from your hands; because from the rising of the sun to the going down of the same, my name is great among the Gentiles: but ye have profaned it.* (Malach. i.)—But I myself say, that those prayers and thanksgivings are alone perfect, and the victims pleasing to God, which are offered by good men. These Christians alone have learned to offer in the commemoration of their dry and liquid food, (bread and wine) in which commemoration they are reminded of the passion which Christ suffered." Dial. cum Tryphon. Judæo, p. 386.

St. Irenæus. "He, giving advice to his disciples, to offer

era, and ordained by St. Peter the apostle, afterwards governed the apostolic see of

their first fruits to God, not as if he stood in need of them, but that they might not seem ungrateful, took bread into his hands, and giving thanks, said, *This is my body*. Likewise he declared the cup to be his blood, and taught the new oblations of the New Testament, which oblation the Church receiving from the Apostles, offers it to God over all the earth—to him who grants us food—the first fruits of this gift in the New Testament, of which the prophet Malachias spoke: *I will not accept offerings from your hands. For from the rising of the sun to the going down of the same, my name is great among the Gentiles, and in every place incense is offered to my name, a clean sacrifice.* (i.) Manifestly hereby signifying, that the first people (the Jews) will cease to offer to God; and that in every place, a sacrifice, and that clean, will be offered to him, and that his name is glorified among the Gentiles.” *Adver. Har.* L. iv. c. xxxii. p. 223, 224.—“Therefore the offering of the Church, which the Lord directed to be made over all the world, was deemed a pure sacrifice before God, and received by him; not that he stands in need of a sacrifice from us, but because he that makes the offering, if his gift be accepted, is thereby rendered worthy of praise.—As then in simplicity the Church offers, her offering is accepted by God as a pure sacrifice.—It is our duty to make an offering,” &c. See p. 197.—*Ibid.* c. xxxiv. p. 324. 326.

Tertullian. “It was ordained in the old law, that no sacrifices should be offered to God, but in the Land of Pro-

Rome, has left us in one of his epistles an evidence of this oblation, under the expres-

mise, which the Lord was to give to the children of Israel; and that, when they entered, sacrifices and holocausts should there be celebrated. Why then does the Spirit declare by his prophets, that, in all the earth, and in every place, sacrifices shall be offered? *In every place incense shall be offered to my name, and a clean offering.* (Malach. i.)

As then it is plain, that a temporary Sabbath was appointed, and an eternal Sabbath predicted; a carnal and spiritual circumcision; a law that would pass away, and a law that would endure for ever; carnal sacrifices likewise, and spiritual sacrifices promised—from this it follows, that all these things being commanded to the Jewish people, the time would come, when they would cease, and the promise of a new law, with spiritual sacrifices would take their place." *Adversus Judæos*, c. v. vi. p. 139. — The same he repeats against Marcion, L. iii. p. 679.—But it seems rather, that he alludes principally to the pure sacrifices of the heart, and not to the establishment of a real sacrificial offering. In other parts of his works, however, I meet with expressions which evidently pertain to a sacrifice.—Such as *altars*, *offerings* for the dead, the duty of priests to *offer*, and annual *oblations* of husbands and wives for their departed consorts." *Ad Uxor.* l. 2.

St. Cyprian. Writing to the Clergy and people of a certain district in Africa, he laments that, contrary to an established rule, a brother clergyman had been appointed, by will, an executor or guardian, when it was the sole duty of

sion of *offerings*, which are to be made as ordained at stated times and hours. Jus-

the ministers of the gospel "to attend to the altar and sacrifices, and to prayers and supplications." Such likewise, he observes, was the view of the Almighty in the establishment by Moses of the Levitical order, and then adds: "The same disposition holds good now, that they who are promoted by clerical ordination, be not called away from the service of God, nor perplexed by worldly business; but receiving aliment from their brethren, they withdraw not from the altar and from sacrifices, day and night intent on heavenly things."—He next remarks that, in a case like this, it had been decreed, that for no brother, who by will had made such a disposition, "any offering should be made, or sacrifice celebrated, for his repose: because he merits not to be named at the altar in the prayer of the priests, whose wish it was to withdraw them from the altar."—He, therefore, forbids prayers and oblations to be made for him. *Ep. 1. p. 1, 2, 3.*—
 "Although I am sensible, that most bishops, set over the Church of God, hold to the maxims of evangelical truth and divine tradition, and depart not, by any human and innovating discovery, from that which Christ our master taught and did; yet as some, through ignorance or simplicity, in the sanctification of the cup of the Lord, and in delivering it to the people, do not that, which Jesus Christ our Lord and God, the teacher and founder of this sacrifice, himself did and taught; therefore, I judge it necessary to write to you, in order that, if there be any

tin also, and Irenæus, together with Tertul-
lian, Latin Fathers, who flourished in the

one still in that error, when he sees the light of truth, he may return to the root and foundation of Christian tradition.—Then proceeding to the point, he says, “Be then advised, that, in offering the cup, the rule, ordained by Christ, be followed, that is, that the cup, which is offered in commemoration of him, be wine mixed with water. For as he said: *I am the true vine*; not water, but wine, is the blood of Christ. And what is in the chalice cannot be thought the blood, by which we obtained redemption and life, if wine be wanting, whereby that blood is shewn, which, as all the Scriptures attest, was shed.” *Ep. lxiii. p. 148.*—“In the priest Melchisedech we see prefigured the sacrament of the Christian sacrifice, the holy scriptures declaring: *Melchisedech King of Salem brought forth bread and wine; and he was the priest of the Most High God, and he blessed Abraham.* (Gen. xiv.) And that he bore the resemblance of Christ the Psalmist announces: *Thou art a priest for ever according to the order of Melchisedech.* (Ps. cix.) This order thus comes and descends from that sacrifice, that Melchisedech was the priest of the Most High God, as our Lord Jesus Christ. He offered sacrifice to God the Father; he offered the same as did Melchisedech, that is, bread and wine, his own body and blood: and the blessing given to Abraham, now applies to our people.”—“But in the book of Genesis, that the blessing given to Abraham might be properly celebrated, the representation of the sacrifice of Christ, appointed in bread

second age of the Church, have written of this sacrifice almost in the same words and sentiments, I have employed in these discourses. They have all seized the memorable prediction of Malachias in that very sense in which I have presented it to you—they have applied it directly to the Christian sacrifice of the new law,—and together with St. Cyprian and a number of other Latin and Greek Fathers of the third and fourth centuries, present us such a body of evidence in attestation of the early faith of the Church being the same as our own at this day, as should leave the upright Pro-

and wine; and thus he who is the plentitude, fulfilled the truth of the prefigured image." *Ibid.* p. 149.—“He afterwards adds :—“If Jesus Christ, our Lord and God, be himself the High Priest of his Father, and if he first offered himself a sacrifice to him, and commanded the same to be done in remembrance of him; then that Priest truly stands in the place of Christ, who imitates that which Christ did, and then offers in the Church a true and complete sacrifice to God the Father, doing what he ordained. For the whole discipline of religion and truth is subverted, if that which was commanded be not faithfully complied with.”

Ibid. p. 155.

testant thunderstruck at being informed by his uncandid instructor, that the eucharistic sacrifice of the new law was a rite unknown to the primitive Church.

The fathers speak so unanimously and positively on this subject, and their testimonies are so many recorded monuments of the ancient faith, that they stand before us like an army of witnesses, which it is impossible for malice herself to overthrow. "It is certain," writes the learned Protestant Dr. Grabe, "that Irenæus and all the fathers, either cotemporary with the apostles or their immediate successors, whose writings are still extant,—considered the blessed Eucharist to be the sacrifice of the new law, and offered bread and wine on the altar, as sacred oblations to God the Father; and that this was not the private opinion of any particular church or teacher, but the public doctrine and practice of the Universal Church, which she received from the apostles, and they from Christ."

My Brethren, from the disciples of the apostles, I will lead you up to the apostles themselves. In the 13th chapter of their Acts, mention is made of this sacrifice, and we read, and *as they were ministering to the Lord and fasting, the Holy Ghost said to them, Separate me Saul and Barnabas.* (v. 2.) But I must here observe, that the English or Latin word *ministering* does not convey the full sense of the Greek term; which whenever it is used absolutely, in scripture, as in the first chapter of St. Luke, and frequently in the Epistle of St. Paul to the Hebrews, always signifies the function of sacrifice. Hence Erasmus, who is no little authority with our adversaries, has ventured to translate this passage, *and as they were sacrificing to the Lord.* St. Paul also hence writes, *The chalice of benediction which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? And the bread which we break, is it not the partaking of the body of our Lord?—The things which the heathens sacrifice, they sa-*

crifice to devils, and not to God. And I would not that you should be made partakers with devils. You cannot drink the chalice of the Lord and the chalice of devils : you cannot be partakers of the table of the Lord, and of the table of devils ; and addressing himself to the Jews, he writes, *We have an altar, whereof they have no power to eat who serve the tabernacle.* (1 Cor. x. 16. 20, 21. Heb. xiii. 10.)

From these written evidences I may next appeal to others in stone and marble, which most strikingly attest the existence of a sacrifice *in every place*. Let it be observed that every ancient Church contains the evidence of a sacrifice in the altar, universally fixed in one particular part of the edifice; and whether we direct our researches to the Christian temples of Italy or Greece, or to the ruins of remote antiquity in Asia, this monument incessantly reminds the observing traveller, that Christianity and Sacrifice had a co-existence in every part of the world. The very terms continu-

ally employed in the ancient Liturgies, of Temple, Altar, and Priest, distinctly prove that by this rite was understood a true and real sacrifice, to which these are specially destined.

My Brethren, to the declarations of so many Christian authorities, permit me also to add the testimonies of Pagan and Jewish evidence of the 2d and 3d centuries. *Origen** informs us, "That no sooner did the Christian religion begin to spread, than the Jews gave out that the Christians put an INFANT TO DEATH, and EAT IT."—"And that the enemies of the Christian religion averred before those who did not know it, that Christians had been surprised, whilst they were *eating* the flesh of infants." *Cecilius*, who flourished in the 3d century, (whilst a Pagan) says, that the Christians take pride in their crimes. "When they wish to receive any one into their religion," he continues, "they

* Lib, 6. nn. 27. 40.

present him *a child covered with flour*, in order to conceal the murder which they commit.*” My Brethren, how easy is it to perceive that the Pagans were in these reflections, confounding their own misconceptions, and the doctrine of Christians on the real presence and the sacrifice of Jesus Christ in the sacrament of the altar. Indeed this is confessed by Tertullian,† who says, *On account of the sacraments, we are called most wicked murderers of children.*

Such, then, my Brethren, being the testimony of the universal world, for the doctrine of the Catholic Church, I will simply ask the unbeliever, if a doctrine so extraordinary and so singular, and thus widely diffused among mankind, could have been any other than originally revealed by Jesus Christ, and distinctly taught by the apostles to the nations of the earth? Nay if there must not have been some practical

* See Minuc. Felix.

† Apol. n. 7.

rite, whereby to perpetuate that faith among them? Yes, writes the prophet, *in every place there is SACRIFICE, and to my name a clean offering.*

. Now against this body of testimony, what is there that can be produced? Only the objections of a few Protestants, even divided on the question among themselves. Concerning the point of the real presence, writes (Bishop Montague*) “I say there need be no difference, if men were disposed, as they ought, to peace. For the disagreement is only about the mode of the presence, the thing is yielded to on either side, viz. that there is in the Eucharist a real presence.” Bishop Forbes grants “the Sacrifice of the Supper to be not only propitiatory, (that is rightly offered) for the remission of our daily sins; but impetratory also to obtain from God all blessings; which if the Bible teach not in express terms, yet that the holy fathers have

* Appeal, p. 289.

with unanimous consent thus understood, has been often proved, and must be evident to every person who reads them.”—“The consecrated elements, (says Thorn-dike) are truly the sacrifice of Christ upon the cross, the body of Christ being contained in them. Moreover the sacrifice of the cross, being necessarily propitiatory and impetratory, it cannot be denied that the sacrifice of the Eucharist in as much as it is the same sacrifice of the cross, is both propitiatory and impetratory.”—Even Luther, the oracle of the reformation, stands up against these reformers, and calls the Eucharist “*an adorable sacrament.*” He also writes, “the elevation may be retained with piety, as a testimonial of the real and corporeal presence in the bread; since by this action the Priest says, Behold, Christians, this is the body of Jesus Christ, which was given for you.” Truly then we may say of Protestants, *their evidence is not agreeing.* (Mark xiv. 56.)

In conclusion therefore, taking into consideration the figures of the old law, the declarations of the prophets, the positive language of the New Testament, and the universal consent of nations for eighteen hundred years, together with historical facts, let us come forward and adore that Jesus Christ who lives in the sacrament of the Eucharist ;—let us reduce our understandings and our senses in obedience to faith, and under those sacred elements, let us confess the presence of our God. Let us humble ourselves, that we may exalt his power ; let us drink of the stream of benediction, that our *souls may magnify the Lord, and our spirits rejoice in God their Saviour ; because he hath regarded the humility of his creatures ; for behold from henceforth all generations shall call us blessed. Because he that is mighty hath done great things for us, and holy is his name. And his mercy is from generation to generations to them that fear him ; and he hath shewed might in his arm : he hath scattered*

the proud in the conceit of their hearts. He hath put down the mighty from their seat, and hath exalted the humble. He hath filled the hungry with good things, and the rich he hath sent away empty. He hath received his servants, being mindful of his mercy, as he foretold to our fore-fathers, to Israel, and to his seed for ever. (Luke i. 46.)



SERMON XLI.

ON COMMUNION UNDER ONE KIND.

He that eateth this bread shall live for ever. (John vi. 59.)

CONSISTENTLY with an established principle of the Jews, ancient and modern Christians of every denomination are agreed, that the law must be explained according to the sentiment of the Church and traditional practice. By this only we are enabled to distinguish the spirit from the letter, and to discern what is indispensable from what is unessential. It even forms the line of proceeding universally adopted in our civil courts of justice.—Whatever has been the perpetual practice, says the judge, is the law.—The history of the ancient Jews furnishes many examples in point, particularly in the observance of the rigid law of the Sabbath, the least viola-

tion of which brought upon the transgressors, signal penalties, and an inevitable curse. It was by this rule that Jesus Christ approved of David's conduct; when acting on the High Priest's interpretation, *he entered into the house of God, and did eat the loaves of proposition, which it was not lawful for him to eat, nor for them that were with him, but for the priests only. And have ye not read in the law, says Jesus Christ, that on the Sabbath day the priests in the temple break the Sabbath day, and are without blame.* (Matt. xvii. 4, 5.) The law ordained that it should be kept as a day of complete rest; yet it was so explained by tradition, as to allow of personal defence, or of an action that was necessary;—such as driving cattle to water,—or assisting to get a sheep or an ox out of a pit, into which they might have fallen.—Our blessed Saviour even worked a miracle, on the Sabbath day,—and cured the man with the withered hand, purposely to teach the Jews how they were to distinguish between the

spirit, and the letter of the law. *It is lawful*, he said, *to do a good deed on the Sabbath day.* (Matt. xii. 12.)

I might also instance another practice among the Jews, as grounded on tradition,—that of praying for the dead.—For in whatever character our adversaries consider the book of Machabees, the practice is there established, as settled among the Jews, though it does not appear to have been taught by any part of their written law, and must therefore have been founded on immemorial tradition. “If then,” says a great Doctor * of the Church, “it was
 “ necessary in order to understand a law,
 “ which enters into such full detail and
 “ which may be considered as all letter,
 “ that it should be explained by the practice and interpretation of the synagogue,
 “ how much more necessary is this in the
 “ law of the New Testament, where liberty
 “ in observance is less restrained, and
 “ where the line of practice is less distinct.”

* Bossuet.

Our principle is moreover proved by many examples in the Christian Church, admitted by Protestants, as well as Catholics. The institution of the Sabbath and the universal prohibition against eating blood, were ordinances of God, antecedent to the Mosaic law, and were therefore to be distinguished from the Levitical observances annulled by the Gospel. Nay the latter injunction was confirmed by the apostles themselves, in their Council of Jerusalem; yet Protestants like Catholics, have not been afraid to act against them, without the sanction of any written law; and consider themselves justified therein before God, by the sole traditional practice of the Church.—Otherwise, what is there to justify their violation of an explicit law? I know it will be said, in respect to the law of the Sabbath, that because Jesus Christ rose from the dead, on the first day of the week, and the Christians held their assemblies on that day, as mentioned in the writings of the apostles, it is therefore to be kept holy.—

But, my Brethren, the appointment of a new festival is not the abrogation of an old one,—an additional obligation is never a substitution.—Tradition consequently must be admitted to be a sufficient authority, for setting aside that positive divine law, which said, *Remember thou keep holy the Sabbath day*; which was in fact the seventh day of the week, whereas Sunday is the first.

Now, my Brethren, in advancing to the point of controversy, with our Protestant friends, I lay it down as a principle, that as the spirit of the revealed law is only known by its continual interpretation, so the essence and substance of the sacraments, which form a part, can only be discovered by the constant practice and tradition of the Church. And proceeding on this ground I hope to convince my hearers, this day, that in receiving the sacred eucharist under either kind, we receive the entire sacrament or the body and blood of Jesus Christ. First, because it is the di-

rect consequence of the doctrine of the real presence in the eucharist ; 2ndly, because it forms a decided article of Catholic communion ; and 3dly, because it is agreeable to the constant and universal practice of the Church. *

* On a subject so important as communion under one kind, I cannot do better than produce those instructive lessons which the Council of Trent addressed to the whole Christian world on this point of doctrine ; since they speak the uniform sentiments of the Church at the present day.

“ As on the tremendous and most holy Sacrament of the Eucharist, various frightful errors have been propagated in different parts, through those wicked arts of the devil, by which, in several countries, many have been seen to fall from the faith and that obedience due to the Catholic Church, the most holy, œcumenical and general Council of Trent, being lawfully assembled in the Holy Ghost, and having the Legates of the holy See presiding in it, determines, that whatever relates to the receiving under both kinds shall be now discussed. On which account it strictly forbids all the faithful to believe, teach, or preach otherwise in future, than in conformity with the explanations and definitions laid down in this decree.”

“ Therefore the holy Synod, instructed by the Holy Ghost, who is the Spirit of wisdom and of understanding, the Spirit of counsel and of piety, and following the senti-

That the essence and substance of the sacraments can alone be learnt from the

ment and opinion of the Church, declares and teaches, that the laity, and priests when not celebrating (Mass) are bound by no precept to receive the eucharist under both kinds; nor in any manner can it be doubted, without forfeiting faith, that communion of either suffices for salvation. For although Christ our Lord instituted in his last Supper this venerable Sacrament, under the species of bread and wine, and so delivered it to his apostles, nevertheless by that institution and distribution it was not intended that all the faithful should be compelled to receive in both species by a divine ordinance. Neither can it be properly shewn from the words in the sixth chapter of St. John, that communion in both species is a divine command, as the various explanations of the Fathers and Doctors every where shew. For he who said, *unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man, and drink his blood, you shall not have life in you*, has also said, *if any one shall eat of this bread, he shall live for ever*. And he who said, *he that eats my flesh and drinks my blood, has eternal life*, has also said, *the bread that I will give is my flesh for the life of the world*. Infine he who said, *he that eats my flesh and drinks my blood remains in me and I in him*, has said, at the same time, *he that eats this bread shall live for ever*." (John vi.)

"The Council moreover decrees, that saving the essence of the Sacraments, the Church has always possessed the power of making such regulations and changes, in the

continual practice of the Church, and the voice of tradition, is evident from the con-

administration of the Sacraments, as according to the different circumstances of things, times, and places, she considers most to the advantage of the receivers, and productive of respect to the mysteries themselves. This the apostle seems evidently to admit, when he says, *Let a man so account of us, as of the Ministers of Christ, and the dispensers of the mysteries of God.* (1 Cor. iv.) And it is sufficiently clear that he used this power in the other sacraments as well as in this, because having made some regulation respecting the use of this, he said, *the rest I will set in order when I come.*" (1 Cor. xi. 34.)

"Wherefore, though from the commencement of the Christian religion, the use of both kinds was common, nevertheless, in the course of time, that custom having almost universally changed, the Church recognizing this authority in the administration of the Sacraments, and urged by weighty and just causes, has approved the practice of communicating under one kind, and has commanded it to be considered as law; and to censure, or alter it, at pleasure, without the authority of the Church, is forbidden."

"The Council moreover declares, that although our Redeemer, as before said, instituted this Sacrament at his last Supper, under two species, and so gave it to the apostles, nevertheless it must be acknowledged that the whole and entire Christ, and the true sacrament are received under either kind;—and therefore, that those who re-

duct of our adversaries, who themselves quit the letter of the scripture, in the ad-

ceive but one species only, are not deprived of any fruit or grace necessary for salvation." *Sess. 21. de Com.*

Notwithstanding these decrees, it is no uncommon thing to hear innovating spirits of the Catholic community, expressing a wish to see the ancient discipline of the Church revived, which permitted the administration of communion to the laity, under both kinds. And these characters are fond of quoting the Council of Trent, whose decision on the subject, is drawn in the following manner. "Whether the reason by which the Catholic Church was induced to communicate the laity, and likewise priests when not celebrating (Mass) under the species of bread only, are to be so strictly maintained, that on no account the use of the cup may be conceded to any particular nation or kingdom, under the special conditions, which the Council is requested to state,—(the holy Synod) only seeking what is most conducive to the salvation of those for whom it is asked, decrees, that the question is to be wholly referred to our most holy Lord (the Pope) to whom by the present decree it belongs to decide; and who according to his own prudence will do that which he shall judge useful to the Christian community, and salutary to those who petition for the use of the cup." *Sess. 22.*

Decretum de concess. Cal.—The author of the *Classical Tour* referring to this decree, says, "If in reviving primitive discipline, (the Pope) would also exercise the power which the Council of Trent has entrusted to him, and admit the

ministration of the sacraments, to tread in the traditional practice of ages. Else

laity to the cup (so solemn and impressive a part of the sacred rite) and at the same time communicate to every nation the comfort of singing the praises of God in their own language, he would render to the Church of Christ a most important and ever memorable service."

It is much more easy to mislead, than to set right the judgments of men. Mr. Eustace's observation undoubtedly implies that the faithful are deprived of some valuable privilege or advantage, in being prohibited from an ordinary use of the cup—and that the Council of Trent was even favourable to the restoration of this part of ancient discipline. Mr. Eustace's learning I conceive cannot have left him unacquainted with the particular circumstances that induced the Council to pass the decree in question. It was not to satisfy the pious Catholic, but with a view of reconciling the deluded Protestant, that the measure was strongly pressed upon the Council by the Emperor of Germany, who entertained the fond hope, that nothing more was wanting to reclaim thousands of his subjects strayed from the fold of the Catholic Church. In short, as may be seen in Palavicini's history of the Council, (Lib. 18. c. 4.) whilst some contended that it would infallibly silence the complaints of the reformists,—others, that it would bring back those who had departed from the Church,—and be the means of retaining such as were wavering,—the council only attentive to the salvation of these souls, prudently lodged the power of granting the use of the cup, in the experienced

whence do they conceive themselves authorized to baptize infants, who have no

hands of the Supreme Pontiff. But the sentiments professed by the Fathers, strongly evince, that whilst willing that nothing should be left untried to effect this desirable object, yet that they apprehended a very different result from that which the Imperialists had taught them to expect.

In this cautious manner therefore the Council of Trent partially remitted the decree of the Council of Constance, and at the urgent request of the Emperor, the German states were accordingly allowed the use of the cup by Pius the 4th; but having completely failed of its effects, in promoting a reconciliation, and the scandals becoming daily more frequent, (as Benedict the 14th attests, *de Sac. Miss. lib. 2. c. 22.*) the permission was recalled by Pius the 5th and Gregory the 14th, both learned and virtuous Pontiffs,—and I am not aware that leave to use the cup in ordinary communion, has in any instance been granted since.

The question whether the use of the cup should be allowed to the laity, is one of the greatest consequence to religion, and as the objections to it are seldom examined, or balanced against the reasons adduced in its favour, it is one seldom fairly considered by our adversaries. The Church is undoubtedly solicitous to encourage whatever promotes the piety and edification of her children; and as far as these effects would be advanced by this prac-

faith, when it is particularly ordered, in scripture, that the person shall be first

tice, she would be desirous of indulging them in it. But whilst the Church is studious to increase the devotion of the faithful by every means in her power, she is equally desirous of protecting the Sacraments against indignity and disrespect.

It was the practice of the primitive Christians to carry the eucharist to their houses ; and the Church indulged them in it, that they might have the benefit of daily communion, which they were in the habit of administering to themselves by their own hands. This custom the Church tolerated for a time ;—but when the faithful had exceedingly multiplied, and the fervour of the first ages had passed, she no longer sanctioned this indulgence, on account of the indignities to which the sacrament was thereby frequently exposed. Solicitous in the same manner of protecting the sacrament from those abuses and indignities to which the practice of communicating under the species of *wine* is always liable, the Church has been under the necessity of no longer allowing, what for a length of time she had tolerated, till indifference, impiety, and sacrilegious profanation, impelled her to adopt a different course. And as a growing spirit of innovation and resistance compelled the Church to restrain the faithful in the indiscriminate lecture of the scriptures, (see note from Fenelon, vol. ii. p. 337) so a rising spirit of profaneness and impiety was the real cause of the discontinuance of the permission to use the cup. The abuse of the indulgence has led to the restraint.

instructed ; *going, teach ye all nations, baptizing them.* (Matt. xxviii. 19.)—Else

The practice and discipline of the ancient Church, cannot be assumed as a rule for the present time, unless it can be shewn that the ardour of modern piety is equal to that of the primitive Christians. So accustomed however are our senses become to blasphemy, sacrilege, and profanation,—so habituated to hear the holy scriptures themselves, and the sacred name of Jesus vilified, derided, and *contradicted*, by men who call themselves Christians, that we are in a manner *seasoned* to these impieties, and think little of those indignities to which the sacraments would be exposed, if the Church did not watch thus cautiously over their administration. We know how strong is the objection of people to eat or drink after others with the same instruments and vessels :—and yet the difficulty of administering the cup to a whole multitude is never adverted to ! How many would turn from it through disgust ! how many from the apprehension of contracting some disease ! And yet is the sacrament to be exposed to these irreverences !—To say nothing of the danger of spilling, complaints of bad wine, and a hundred other similar objections, to which the profaneness of the present age would give occasion. Let us suppose infine, that forty or fifty patients in an hospital, labouring under every kind of disease, are to be administered from the cup ; what must be the sensations of some in such circumstances ? Would edification or disedification more probably ensue ?

I am aware that the example of the Protestant communi-

whence do they justify any other mode of administering this sacrament, but that

ties will be adduced in refutation of my objection;—but most ineffectually. For to say nothing of the many scandalous stories continually mentioned, which are known to every officiating curate in the country, it is notorious that the Protestant poor rarely communicate:—and even among the Methodists and Dissenters this religious rite is chiefly limited to the elders and the heads of the flock.—It is only in the Catholic Church, where the table of the Lord is always spread, and where the multitude freely participate.

The prospect moreover of reconciling the Protestant communities to the Catholic Church by the use of the cup, would be perfectly illusory. The experiment had been ineffectually made upon the Hussites and Bohemians antecedently to the Council of Trent, by the Council of Basil, and different Popes, and as often had been revoked on account of the abuses committed. The Protestants of the present day being much further removed from the Catholic faith, are so much the less likely to be reclaimed by such an indulgence. For it must never be forgotten, that by the Council of Basil and those Popes who allowed the use of the cup to the Bohemians and others, it was universally required, that in administering the species of the wine, the pastors should instruct the people, that the whole Christ was contained and received under either kind, and that it would be heresy to doubt it. Hence the Council of Trent declared in the following canon, that *if any one shall deny*

of plunging the person into water, as Jesus Christ and the rest of the apostles

that the whole and entire Christ, the Fountain and Author of all graces, is received under the species of bread only, because as some falsely assert, it is not received under each species according to the institution of Christ, let him be anathema. Sess.

21. can. 3. Will any one believe then, that whilst Protestants are obliged to profess this point of doctrine as an article of Catholic faith, the mere permission to receive in both kinds, would be viewed by them as a valuable concession of the Catholic Church? They insist upon the cup, because they believe the sacrament imperfect without it. Only persuade them to admit the point of faith, and there can be little doubt of their readily acquiescing in the Catholic practice; one being dependant on the other. Indeed, should a person strenuously insist upon receiving the cup, and make it a particular point of attention, I should always be inclined to suspect, that his faith was not in conformity with the above canon of the Council of Trent. Besides, while Protestants are so seldom found to approach to communion at all (and their comparative number with Catholics is very small) can it be imagined that they exclude themselves from the Catholic Church, merely because she will not communicate them under both kinds? Protestants may employ this reason as a plausible pretext for continuing separate from the Church of Rome, but I am not afraid to declare that their hearts are more turned from the Catholic Church than their heads, and that it would be a vain attempt to think of satisfying the one, in the actual

were baptized? — For as baptism in the original language signifies plunging, or dipping, the practice of pouring only a few drops of water, is a departure from the original form of baptism, and to those who only attend to the written doctrine of Jesus Christ, must appear a sacrilegious innovation, or a species of mutilation of this sacrament of regeneration. If our adversaries cannot solve this knotty difficulty, let them permit it to explain many others;— or let them shew, if in the administration of one sacrament, they are allowed to direct themselves by the rule of tradition, and in place of law to admit the interpretation of the Church,—why they are not allowed also to guide themselves by the same rule, in the administration of either of the other sacraments, for instance, that of the sacred eucharist. But I can prove that

disposition of the other. Among all those Protestants whom I have received into the pale of the Catholic Church, I never met that individual who expressed any dissatisfaction at not being allowed to communicate under both kinds. Where the faith is sound, the mind has no difficulty in submitting to the existing regulation of the Church.

they themselves do not follow the rule of scripture, even in the administration of that sacrament, though this is made the ground-work of all their objection against communion in one kind, among the Catholics.

If our reformed brethren will agree to make the letter of scripture their guide, they must communicate in the evening, at the end of supper, and sitting; and whoever presides at the assembly, must exercise the priestly office of consecrating. He must also consecrate in *unleavened bread*, since Jesus Christ communicated his apostles in the same; for we know that the supper took place during the days of *unleavened bread*, when by the law of Moses, *there was not any thing leaven in the houses of Israel,—nor in all their habitations.* (Exod. xii.) He must likewise previously humble himself by washing the feet of those to whom he is to distribute communion, who also are to be most particular in observing

this ceremony, since from the words of Jesus Christ to his apostles, laid down by St. John, it seems that it was essential to a worthy communion, and made a necessary condition for participating in the graces which were offered with it. When Peter objected, *Jesus answered, If I wash thee not, thou shalt have no part with me.—I have given you an example, that as I have done to you, so you do also.* (John xiii. 8. 15.)

I know the Protestant will say, this was a distinct action, unconnected with the supper:—but let him recollect, that whether connected or unconnected, it is enjoined and obligatory. According to the letter of the scripture, even the salvation of St. Peter was declared to depend upon his compliance;—so that our adversaries are driven to the alternative of either considering it as a necessary part of the *supper* of Christ, or of regarding it as a distinct sacrament, necessary for salvation. For it is a sign of grace, exhibited in matter and form, and pronounced

essential to having a part with Christ. The Protestant who denies this, goes against the clear letter of that authority, on which he proposes exclusively to form his faith. Nevertheless he denies it, and justifies himself by saying, that tradition has differently explained to him the intention of our Saviour;—that Jesus Christ neither made it essential to the mystery of his *supper*, nor instituted it as a distinct sacrament;—that he merely insisted on the submission of St. Peter as his disciple, and proposed his own act as an instructive lesson of humility and charity to all his followers. It is the interpretation of the Church, he says, which I have made my rule in studying this passage of Scripture.—And would to God, that he would make it his rule throughout; for then he would not charge the Catholics with mutilating the holy sacrament of the altar, by receiving it in one kind;—then he would know, that it has always been considered immaterial in the Christian Church, from

the earliest period, whether the faithful communicated under both kinds or under one;—since the constant and defined faith of the Church has taught, that the body and blood of Jesus Christ are received unbroken and entire under either species, as well as under both. *Whoever*, writes St. Paul, *shall eat this bread, OR drink the chalice of the Lord unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and the blood of the Lord.* (1 Cor. xi. 27.) And the Catholic Church, by the Council of Trent, declares, “if any one shall deny, that in the venerable sacrament of the eucharist, under each kind, and under every part of each species, a division being made, the whole Christ is contained, let him be anathema.”*

Indeed, my Brethren, as I have already observed, this doctrine follows as a consequence from what I trust is already proved to your satisfaction, that the whole substance of the *bread* is converted into the

* Sess. 13. ch. 8. can. 3.

body of Jesus Christ, and the whole substance of the *wine* into his *blood*; * and that as the one can never again be separated from the other,—that is, as Jesus Christ is now immortal and impassible, so every, and the smallest particle containing his sacred *body*, must also contain his sacred *blood*; which are of course together received by the communicant, wholly and entirely, as they subsist glorified in heaven, in an eternal union with the divine nature. Would he communicate to us a lifeless body?—He has already said, *it is the spirit that quickeneth, the flesh profiteth nothing.* (John vi. 64.) Would he give us his blood only?—How could it be found without his body!—or would he give us his body first and his blood after with the wine?—Then there must be a division. Therefore, as much as it is impossible again to separate the soul of Christ from his body, so it would be equally impossible again to

* Can. 2.

divide his body from his blood ;—and consequently both must be received under every and the smallest particle of either species.

Here, perhaps, you will ask, Are there then as many bodies of Jesus Christ as there are particles of bread and drops of wine? No, my Brethren, the elements or accidents are multiplied, but not the substance. You might as well ask, if the essence of God is multiplied because his whole presence is every where? or if the Holy Ghost was multiplied, when there appeared to the apostles *parted tongues as it were of fire, and it sat upon every one of them.* (Acts ii. 3.) But you will say, let us examine the Scripture:—certainly, my Friends, and you will not discover one passage requiring the faithful to receive the eucharist in both kinds:—whereas you will observe many, declaring the whole substance of Jesus Christ to be under one; and promising eternal life to those who receive but one; *he that eateth this bread,*

says St. John, *shall live for ever.* (John vi. 59.) But we read, you say, that Jesus Christ, having blessed the cup, *gave it to his apostles, saying, drink ye all of this,—and they all drank of it.* (Matt. xxvi. 27. Mark xiv. 23.)

My Friends, the last and mysterious *supper* of Jesus Christ, presents to our faith two distinct things, the institution of a sacrament, and the institution of a sacrifice; the one is the sign or figure of Christ's humanity, the other is the sign or figure of his death and passion. *I am the bread of life,* said Jesus Christ, *my blood is drink:* and St. Paul continues, *as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you shall shew the death of the Lord.* (John vi. 48. 56.—1 Cor. ii. 26.) That is, by this sign you will figure the separation of his body and soul in death on Mount Calvary. Now, my Brethren, though he left his *body* and *blood* as a pledge to all his followers, and even commanded them to feed on it, still the sublime office of representing by a commemo-

rative sacrifice his death and passion, he restricted to priests and bishops consecrated to that ministry.

It is to be observed, therefore, that all the words of Jesus Christ at his *last supper*, were addressed to the ministers of the Church, for none were present but the apostles; and consequently for the faithful to explain the passage just cited, into a general ordonnance to communicate in both kinds, is as mistaken an interpretation as if they were to explain the other injunction, *do this in commemoration of me*, (Luke xxii. 19.) into a general command to the faithful to consecrate and administer. Now as the Protestants very properly permit tradition, or the perpetual practice of the Church to determine the sense of the one text, so let them consistently take tradition for their guide in the other.

I am aware it will be said by our adversaries, that although St. John offers the fullness of grace, and life everlasting to him that eats the *bread*, yet that this and

other similar passages, always suppose the receiving under the other species, or that of the wine. But, my Brethren, independently of that famous declaration of the apostle, whereby he *says*, that *whoever shall eat the bread, OR drink the chalice, shall be guilty of both body and blood*, I will leave it for Protestants to reflect on the cloud of uncertainty in which they would involve the whole of Scripture, if such a mode of explanation were ever adopted, or if it should ever be lawful to add to the letter of the Gospel.

Before I proceed, however, I wish it to be particularly understood that I have no intention of denying, that in the first ages it was the general practice for the people to communicate in both kinds;—my object is to shew, that both forms were common,—that both were considered equally good and holy,—and that the faithful indifferently communicated under one or both kinds, according to circumstances. Observe, therefore, my Brethren, that I come

not here to condemn the practice of communion in both kinds, otherwise I should condemn the Catholic Church. The practice has been frequently permitted in particular circumstances, and is tolerated at this day, I believe, in the kingdom of Bohemia, and in the instance of the coronation of the kings of France. My present object is to justify the Church, in those ordinances of discipline, which generally prohibit the administering lay communion under the form of *wine*, or restrict communion under both species to the priest sacrificing at the altar.

My Brethren, from the writings of the holy Fathers, we collect, that in the first ages of the Church, the Christians usually communicated under both kinds in their public assemblies, but under one kind only when they indulged in this act of piety in their private houses. This some may think confirmed, by what the Evangelist writes of the first Christians in the Acts of the Apostles; *and they*, he says, *were persevering in the doctrine of the apostles, and in the com-*

munication of the breaking of bread.—And a little after, he mentions, *that they were continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house.* (Acts ii. 42. 46.) My Friends, it was no very difficult thing in a wine country like Asia, and whilst the Christians constituted but a small part of the community, to administer the holy eucharist to them under both kinds; but when their numbers had greatly increased, this ceremony became exceedingly tedious and inconvenient, and in climates less favourable to the growth of wine, often absolutely impossible to be practised. On solemn festivals, therefore, and when there happened to be assembled a crowd of communicants, it very early became a custom in some Churches, to distribute communion under the form of bread only, and to administer the sacred wine to none but those who specially desired it. I do not mean to say that there was any general rule as yet established, but merely that the pastors of the

church considered it an indifferent thing, and that the same Christian who communicated under both kinds one day, would as readily and as fervently communicate under one kind on the morrow.

Many of the holy Fathers, and among the rest St. John Chrysostom, are loud in lamenting the abuses and accidents to which the administration of the wine was thus exposed. Such then was the practical discipline of the Church until the 5th or 6th centuries, when, it seems, that, without the aid of any coercive law, the communion of the people under both kinds was discontinued in every part of the Church, without the least expression of uneasiness or discontent among the faithful, which clearly marks their universal faith to have been, that under either kind was received the entire sacrament; and I do not find that any formal decree, on this subject, had been issued by any council of the Church, until the 15th century, when the

Councils of Constance* and Basil exerted themselves against certain innovating spirits, in the maintenance of this point of established ecclesiastical discipline: and it was at this period also, that the latter council consenting to the urgent instances of the Bohemians, granted them permission to communicate in both kinds, enjoining the clergy at the same time to declare to them, *that they were firmly to believe that there was under the species of the bread not the body only, nor under the species of the wine the blood only, but under each species the whole and entire Christ.* †

* The Fathers of the Council of Constance in their 13th Session decreed, that the practice already introduced of administering the sacrament under the form of bread only was to be considered *as law*,—and all those were to be condemned who should venture to reprobate this practice; and they ordered the bishops to see that the law was observed. The Council of Basil sanctioned this ordinance in the year 1447 against the Taboriti and the Calixtini in their 30th Session, and the Council of Trent did the same thing against the Lutherans and the Calvinists in the year 1562. (See Bened. 14th de Sac. Miss. Lib. 2. cap. 22.)

† Cabass. p. 552.

This doctrine was afterwards most fully confirmed by the Fathers of the Church, in the Council of Trent, who by a special canon pronounced it heresy to hold the contrary sentiment. Such, my Brethren, is the state of the question which merely relates to a point of discipline, or the mode of administering a sacrament, which, saving its essence, the Church at any time is competent to change, though on the article of faith she can never swerve. To prove to you moreover that the faith of the Church has always been, that under either kind is received the entire sacrament, I shall instance a few historical facts.

In the first ages of Christianity it was common frequently to communicate infants, which was done by giving them a few drops of the sacred wine only. It was also usual for the pious faithful to practice daily communion at home, in time of persecution, or when they could not frequent the churches. This they always administered to themselves, under the species of bread, which the Christians carried from

their assemblies to their houses, in a clean napkin called a *Corporal*. In the acts of the ancient councils we continually meet with directions to the faithful, for respectfully preserving the sacred *bread*, but not a word relative to the cups or bottles in which the *wine* was to be kept. I might also instance the universal practice of communicating the dying under the form of bread only. Indeed the accidents to which the moving of the sacred wine would be exposed must be known to every one. The ancient historian Eusebius has left us an account of a fact in proof of the early practice of administering communion to the sick in one kind. He informs us, that when Serapion, a holy penitent, was near his end, he was desirous of making his peace with God, by receiving the eucharist. The pastor however not being able to visit him, on account of indisposition, "committed a small particle of it to a young man, ordering him to moisten it in water, and then to pour it into the mouth of

the dying penitent. The youth therefore carrying the particle, wetted it, and poured it into the mouth of the old man, who having swallowed it by little and little, immediately afterwards expired."

Now if this pastor had conceived that the wine was necessary to complete the sacrament, would he not have also sent it to this dying penitent? To the same effect, we read in the life of St. Ambrose, written by his Deacon and Secretary Paulinus, that when this Saint was at the point of death, St. Honoratus who came to attend him, in his last moments, "*during the silence of the night thrice heard these words,—*" "Arise"—"delay not"—"he is going to die."—" *He went down to him, and presented him the body of our Lord, which the saint had no sooner received than he expired.**" Now setting aside the question of the miracle, would not St. Honoratus have given him also the *blood*, had he not believed that both were received under either kind?

* See St. Basil Epist. 93. ad Cæsar, p. 136.

Two other facts, which speak the ancient faith of the Church on this point are the Mass, which has been always celebrated in one species on Good Friday,—and the adoration that has been always paid by Christians to the *blood* only, to say nothing of the discipline and practice of the Greek Christians.

Lastly, I will produce a proof of a different description, which is the authority of a British Act of Parliament, and the example of the Church of England, both which allow the sick in cases of necessity to be communicated under one kind only. My Brethren, the Catholic clergy have been accused of depriving the laity of the cup—but is it likely they would do this without any object or motive? nay that they would even so far indulge a spirit of contradiction as to deny it to one another when they receive at the *communion table*—or when the *Viaticum* is administered to them in their last mo-

ments? Can it be believed, that priests would consent to a mutilation of the sacrament in the act of expiring? That whilst they express such ardour to receive the Host, such apprehension of dying without it—they should without a murmur, without a complaint renounce their own right to the cup, if they imagined it was wanting to complete the sacrament? My Friends, let moral proofs have their effect as well as evident miracles, for none unquestionably can be more powerful than this, in vindication of the sincerity of the Church, since it ought to be observed, that in his dying hour, the Pope himself communicates only under the form of *bread*. Surely no stronger moral pledge can be offered or desired of that practice being in conformity to the settled faith and doctrine of the universal Church.

My Brethren, I will conclude this discourse and subject with a few words on the article of tradition, which is the word of

God written or unwritten delivered to us. Tradition has been at all times the rule of faith of Christians in the Catholic Church; and I will say, without fear of being refuted, that as Catholics only, have followed the rule of tradition, so they only have been steady, uniform, and consistent in faith; which is surely a strong evidence that they have been directed by the true rule of faith.—It is by the rule of tradition, that we are just what Catholics were two hundred years ago; it was by the same rule that our predecessors at that period continued to be what Catholics had been a thousand before,—and it was tradition which had left them unchanged from the days of the apostles. Whereas every class of persons that have exclusively made the written word their rule, have been led to inconsistency, contradiction and change. A rule consequently which conducts to error, cannot be the true rule of faith, which is to guide men in the way of salvation. I close this sub-

ject with the words of St. Paul; *Therefore Brethren stand fast, and hold the traditions which you have learned whether by word or by our Epistle.* (2 Thess. ii. 14.)



SERMON XLII.

ON THE ADORATION PAID TO THE HOLY
EUCCHARIST.

This is my body which is given for you.

(Luke xxii. 19.)

IT cannot be denied that there are some dispositions which you can never content, some understandings which no reason will ever convince. Whether this arises from any natural defect, or some vicious determination, it is unnecessary to decide, but certainly they are not the characteristics of a kind heart, or generous soul. Indeed to persons resolved to regard the conduct of another with a malevolent eye, I know not what may not become a subject of indiscriminate censure. Exchanges of mutual civility, the noblest works of charity, even one uniform line of virtue will be attri-

buted to pride, hypocrisy and interest. Religion herself will be styled superstition, and the failings of the just man more loudly condemned than the crying iniquities of the most abandoned libertine.

I do not mean to say that such characters are numerous, unless I am allowed to instance those who are religiously inclined to blame ; and if that innate principle in the human heart, (which commands all men to be just towards each other, even towards their enemies) seems frequently wanting to the votaries of religion, it is because they judge more hastily than others, and much too intemperately condemn. For my part, I lay it down as a universal maxim, that not only to every man belongs the right of stating his own faith and ideas on religion,—but that it is evident, others can never know them except from himself. If then, in these controversial discourses, I have in any instance, on mistaken grounds, erroneously imputed to others that which they formally disclaim in principle and consequence, I

now revoke my assertion, and shall always be the foremost to avow the error, of which, on every occasion, I shall stand most happily corrected. But if such be my professions as a Catholic controvertist, I trust I shall experience the same liberal deportment in my adversaries, and that they will not refuse to me this unalienable right of knowing, and declaring the sentiments of my own breast, and the intentions of my own mind.

The worship, which Catholics render to the holy sacrament of the eucharist, * ap-

* "It is not to be doubted," writes the Council of Trent, "but all the faithful of Christ, in the Catholic Church, ought, according to universal practice, to render that divine worship (of Latria) to this most holy sacrament (of the eucharist) which is due to the true God. Neither is it less worthy of adoration, because it was instituted by Christ our Lord to be received (in communion.) For we believe the same God to be present in it, whom the eternal Father, introducing to this world, spoke of, saying; *And let all the angels of God adore him*; whom the *Magi* prostrating adored; whom the Scriptures infine testify to have been adored by the apostles in Galilee. The holy Synod moreover declares, that the practice has been most piously and religiously

pears to give very considerable scandal and offence to those who do not acknowledge the real presence of Jesus Christ under the mysterious elements ; some imagining that to this divine sacrament we pay too much worship, whilst others scrupulously deny it the tribute of any. Now as it is impossible for us to reply to these persons, without requesting them to look back to those discourses which I have already preached on this mystery, I must beg them to consider

introduced into the Church, of annually celebrating on some particular festival-day, by some special veneration and solemnity, this excellent and venerable sacrament,—and of carrying it in processions, through public places, with pomp and parade. For it is most proper, that there should be some stated days, when all Christians, by a singular and special act, may express themselves mindful and grateful to our common Lord and Redeemer, for that ineffable and evidently divine benefit, by which the victory and triumph of his death are represented. And thus indeed it became victorious truth, to triumph over falshood and heresy ; in order that its adversaries, at the sight of such splendour, and in the presence of such great joy, on the part of the universal Church, may pine away disappointed and humbled, or covered with shame and confusion, some time or other repent of their error." *Sess. 13. ch. 5.*

the worship of Catholics connectively with their faith. External worship being only the expression of the sentiment of the soul, strangely deceitful should we be, if we entertained a sentiment, which we cautiously declined to publish. Because when a consequence or effect is clearly traced to its principle or cause, if you concede the principle, it becomes an inconsistency to object to the consequence.—Thus, while worship and adoration are a consequence of the knowledge we have of God's existence and his perfections, the display of devotion is merely the act by which the soul expresses her faith and homage. For where is the difference between these expressions of the soul, My Lord and my God ! and falling down and adoring him. Both are external and significant expressions of her sensations.

My Friends, in a series of instructions, I have already set forth the faith of the Catholic Church, on the sacrament of the eucharist. I have shewn that in the ideas of Catholics, it comprises whatever is most

sacred and most holy,—that under the elemental veil of *bread* and *wine*, exists the substance of the Eternal,—that the spiritual essence of his carnal and divine natures are invisibly present under that sacramental figure.—In short that we believe the real presence of Jesus Christ in the sacrament of the eucharist.—Whether we are right or wrong, is another question, already disposed of, and to which I will not at present return. But since we think thus highly of this sacrament, is it not becoming in us to shew it corresponding respect? And consequently since we believe it to contain the glorified body of Jesus Christ, and to be the very substance of *the Word that was made flesh, and dwelt amongst us*, is not adoration the homage called for, and which we are bound to render to an object, of which we have judged so augustly and divinely? Would it not be to refute our own arguments and to oppose our own principles, if we refused to express outwardly what we inwardly feel?

If we firmly hold that it is not the substance of bread and wine,—but that, concealed under their accidents, it is the substance of the living God in Jesus Christ,—are we not right in kneeling down, to adore it?—Are we not justified in offering to him the same tribute of love and praise that we would pay to him on his throne of heavenly glory?—Are we not bound to offer before him the *incense of benediction*, and to discharge the debt of devout homage by all the means in our power? Indeed we can never render sufficient: and to deny any part of this argument, would be an inconsistency, and a solecism in reasoning, which it is impossible any logical mind can admit for a moment. When persons object then to the worship which Catholics pay to the sacrament of the holy eucharist,—it proves them either ignorant of our faith, or bad reasoners.—For no part of our religion is more easily defended, and may be so satisfactorily proved to Protestants. Whatever be our principles, I suppose they would

wish us to shew consistence.—Let them recollect then what Catholics believe, and they will see the justness of our worshipping the eucharist. Nay, they will censure and condemn us if we do not.

The worship of the eucharist is so immediately a consequence of our faith, that it is a point which can never be tried, never argued by itself. If Jesus Christ be present in the sacrament we are right in paying it divine honours ; if he be not present we are wrong, though not so intentionally. All must absolutely and definitively turn upon these premises, and therefore a reference must be made to those discourses in which this point of faith has been discussed, to see how far Catholics are justified, by scripture, by the Fathers, and by the universal consent of nations, in venerating this sacrament as the adorable body and blood of Jesus Christ.

When Protestants therefore say, that we are hereby guilty of idolatry, and become idolaters, truly we have reason to complain

of a want of fairness in these adversaries. Did we call upon our flocks to worship the substance of bread and wine,—did they adore these material elements, there might be a ground for such a charge. But when faith teaches Catholics to direct their intention to Jesus Christ only, and to refuse to the elements the most trifling homage, (and no homage do they offer till the consecration has been completed) I say, when they are commanded to confine all their respect, veneration, worship and adoration, to the sacred person of Jesus Christ in his divine and human natures, it is too false, too slanderous to represent us as idolaters. What! idolatry to offer to him the incense of our prayers, and the tribute of our praise.—Is it idolatry to adore him in substance and not in figure? * or to repose more faith in the word of God than in the evidence of our senses? Oh then it is base, black calumny, to accuse the Catholics of idolatry! a crime we de-

* Protestants kneel before the figure!

test, a crime we abominate, a crime from which we more readily shrink, than we should from the most cruel death. And are these the sentiments of idolaters? Blush then ye calumniators, or generously confess your error. For at the worst, and in the supposition that the eucharist were mere bread and wine, Catholics could not be charged with idolatry,—since where there is no idolatrous intention there can be no idolatry. When Moses worshipped the flame in the burning bush, did he commit idolatry? Or when the Israelites prostrated before fire and smoke on mount Sinai, did they cease to fear the God that was invisible to their senses?

My Friends, you will find that calumny is never employed but to cover some foul purpose, and effect some iniquitous design; for virtue is always candid and fair,—the open friend of truth. And therefore, wherever calumny is detected, as in this instance, be assured that there has been something unfair and dark, which gave rise to it, and that in propagating the

slander there lurks a secret cause, which when clearly brought before the light of day, will discover the iniquity of those who have had recourse to such expedients, as well as establish the honour and integrity of the persons against whom they have been employed. In proof, witness the slanders pointed against the innocent Saviour of the world. Indeed as calumny is an evidence never offered but in the absence of better, the fact before us decidedly proves, how desperate the alternative was to which our adversaries have been driven, since this idolatry is the grand charge and almost single objection they pretend to bring against the religion of Catholics.*

“Without violating the laws of charity,” writes a Protestant Bishop, “a serious Protestant must consider the members of the Church of Rome as the professors of a religion perfectly abhorrent from the purity

* The Protestant oath of office says; “I believe the sacrifice of the Mass, as now used in the Church of Rome, to be superstitious and idolatrous !”

of the gospel, as involved in idolatrous and superstitious practices ; as men who have not repented of the works of their hands, that they should worship devils and idols of gold and silver and brass and stone and wood ; neither repented they of their murders, nor of their sorceries, nor of their fornications, nor of their thefts." — " Among Catholics," he says, " the cross is an object of adoration, and is petitioned to give increase of grace to the righteous and pardon to the guilty." — " When I see," he continues, " a devotee bending the knee, uplifting the hands and eyes before the figure of the cross, and before the figure of a female trampling a half moon under her feet, I turn from the sight with trepidation and horror. And whilst we see the present people of Rome worshipping this day, in the same temple, at the same altars, sometimes the same images, and always with the same ceremonies, as the old Romans, they must have more charity, as well as skill, in distinguishing than I pretend to, who can ab-

solve them from the same crime of superstition and idolatry, with their Pagan ancestors.”

But Protestants reply, that as the worship of Catholics is externally paid to the elements of bread and wine, their intention is directed to the same, and consequently that they are guilty of an idolatrous act. My Protestant friends, how can you be justified in drawing a conclusion which is in direct contradiction to our declarations? May we not be supposed to be best acquainted with our own hearts and intentions? May we not be allowed to be best qualified to know and declare our own sentiments? Can an individual learn them but from ourselves? I doubt not, my Brethren, but you will admit that it is precisely the intention, which qualifies any moral act, and marks one as impious and idolatrous, while another it justifies. The gospel informs us that the soldiers, in the court of Pilate, bent the knee before Jesus, saying, *hail King of the Jews!*—My Brethren, was

this an act of adoration? Judas gave the kiss of peace—was that an act of love? When the sick woman was cured by touching the hem of our Saviour's garment, was she miraculously favoured for a superstitious action?

My Brethren, in further proof that the intention qualifies every moral act, if you leave a charity at the door of a distressed widow, with a criminal regard to her person, have you kept or broken the law? If a person of the same name as yourself claims a legacy which your intimate friend, to whom the other was a perfect stranger, has bequeathed to you, would you not urge in a court of justice the intention often expressed of the testator? Would you not think that it should determine the minds of a jury, in your favour? Yes, most certainly, and so ought the expressed intention of Catholics, to determine the sentiments of liberal Protestants. We have declared,—and we have repeated times without number, that it is not the accidents of bread and wine which

we worship,—it is not those sensible signs of matter,—it is the hidden invisible and glorified body of Jesus Christ, closely united with the divinity to which we exclusively pay the homage of adoration. It is alone before this object that we bow,—it is to this that we address our prayers,—it is to this that we offer the fragrance of incense, significant of our most sincere and grateful affections.

Moreover as another demonstration of my principle, reflect on the command of God to Moses, *that he should make a brazen serpent, and set it up for a sign, and that whosoever being struck, should look upon it, should live.* (Num. xxi. 8.) Did the Israelites by this act become guilty of idolatry? Did the Almighty in contradiction to his commandment teach them to put their trust in a *brazen image*? Or rather while they turned to the material sign, did they not direct their intention and their hopes to the God of their fathers?—that God who conducted them across the Red Sea, and glorified them in the face of their enemies?

But, my Friends, if it had been possible to convey a Protestant to the Jewish camp, in which the *brazen serpent had been set up for a sign*, and at the same time to give him a view of Catholics paying their pure homage to the holy eucharist, would he not in the fire of his zeal exclaim, these are all sunk into superstition; they are the worshippers of idols!—But would not this be a hasty conclusion? Have I not proved that it would be erroneous?

Besides, my Brethren, might we not retort upon the Protestant?—Does he not also kneel in the presence of the sacrament? * Does he not receive it in that attitude of worship? Yet we do not charge him with adoring bread and wine—we do not style him an idolater, though he pays this homage, simply viewing the sacrament as a material figure. Let us then, my Friends, be just and fair towards each other; controversy thus becomes a source of instruction, and the most certain avenue to truth.

* See the Communion service in the Protestant Communion-Prayer-Book.

It enables us thoroughly to know ourselves, and perfectly to understand our adversaries; and when conducted on these principles most undoubtedly tends to the establishment of charity. For religious animosity almost always originates and subsists in misconception; few systems of faith being so intrinsically different as not to resemble in some points.

Thus, my Brethren, having, as I trust, fully repelled from ourselves the charge of idolatry, you may perceive that we are actuated by the best motives. Regarding the sacrament as the most sacred, and the most august of sensible objects, we are desirous of paying it all the veneration and respect in our power; and contemplating it as a divine object, we are eager to render it divine honours. But whether right, or wrong in the ideas of Protestants, these acts of homage all terminate in the adorable person of Jesus Christ, now seated on the right hand of his Father, in the glory of eternal majesty.

It only remains then for me to close this discourse and subject by exhorting Catholics, in particular, to give testimony of their faith, in this holy sacrament, by the homage of that true devotion, love, and veneration, which it so eminently deserves. Remember at all times the deposit of grace which you have amongst you;—approach to it with every sentiment of religious piety, and with humble gratitude bless the generous charity of Jesus Christ. Take a lesson from the fervent devotion of the saints, and many holy persons towards this divine sacrament; and imitate them in daily dedicating to it a portion of those hours they were accustomed to spend before it in prayer.—It was the delight of their piety to meditate in its presence, and to attend at that divine sacrifice in which this most precious and inestimable offering is presented to God in atonement for the sins of the world.

But above all learn of them to approach to it in holy communion with real fervour

of soul and purity of heart ; let your own breasts reflect the sanctity of the sacrament, and let every virtue there shine as a jewel to adorn the retreat which your Saviour has made for himself within you. Kindle in yourselves and excite that desire of communion, which is so agreeable to God, and so beneficial to you by the increase of grace it procures for you. Sink into your own humility and nothingness to the very lowest pitch—but sink only to rise to the very highest elevation of dignity and favour in the tender mercy and bountiful charity of the Almighty God ; sink,—but to be exalted by Jesus Christ to a level with the angels and blessed spirits, and to participate on earth of those distinguished graces, which are destined for the children of the celestial paradise.

My Friends, great as your unworthiness is, suffer it not to withhold you from the sacred table which Jesus has prepared for you ; often nourish your souls with this divine *pasch* ; if your lives be holy, you

may not fear to make it your *daily bread*. The Catholic Church, by the Council of Lateran, lays every one under the obligation of respectfully receiving it, at least at Easter; and it would be a breach of a formal precept of the Church to neglect compliance. Yet this ecclesiastical ordinance is not in prohibition of more frequent communion, nor the rule which is to direct Christians in this duty, but rather the law which fixes a limit to delay, and obliges all to partake of the sacrament of spiritual life once at least within the year. *Unless you eat of the flesh of the Son of Man you shall not have life in you.* And in punishment of a criminal neglect of this obligation, she even forbids her ministers to perform the rites of Christian burial.

Be assiduous then, my Brethren, in the exercise of this very important duty, and never suffer any cause but impossibility to withhold you.

Moreover, by the long established discipline of the Church, as a mark of re-

spect, you are required to receive the holy communion before you have tasted any other food.* This is merely a point of discipline dispensed with in sickness, and which has been ordained by very ancient councils, to teach the faithful more perfectly to distinguish this heavenly food from all other, and to give it the first place in the desires of their souls.

Study then, my Brethren, to make your whole lives a continued preparation for participating of this holy sacrament; cultivate every virtue becoming your state, and by mortification and purity of manners so sanctify your communions, that they may sanctify you. For remember, the misfortune of an unworthy communion, is one the most disastrous to which you can expose yourselves. *He eats and drinks*, says St. Paul, *judgment to himself*. Like food to the diseased body, the balm of grace

* Tertullian refers to it as taken before any other food.

Ante omnem cibum. Lib. 2. ad Uxor,

becomes a poison to the soul, and under the weight of her guilt, she seems to sink into fatal insensibility or black despair. In the mean time she becomes an object of extreme aversion to God; the hand of his vengeance gradually falls upon the impenitent sinner, and she passes to the tribunal of divine justice, to be hurried into the regions of eternal torture, to receive that retribution which is due to her excessive disregard of mercy and grace.

Therefore, my Brethren, labour to purify your souls from all stain of sin; seek its forgiveness in sincere contrition and penance, and never place yourselves at the table of communion till you can bring a pure and undefiled conscience. *He that eats and drinks unworthily, eats and drinks judgment to himself, not discerning the body of the Lord.* (1 Cor. xi. 29.) In fine, my Brethren, considering the nature of the Catholic faith on the Sacrament of the Eucharist, I conceive, that the ground of astonishment

to Protestants should be, not that we do too much, but that we do so little ; not that we venerate it with too much worship, but that we do not pay it the tribute of more. In the hope that such are your sentiments, I conclude, wishing you every blessing in a worthy participation of it.



SERMON XLIII.

ON THE NECESSITY OF A REMISSION
OF SINS.

*Whose sins ye forgive they are forgiven,
and whose sins ye retain they are retained.*
(John xx. 23.)

WHAT! says the reformer, shall man have the power of forgiving sins?—It is truly astonishing that we and our Protestant countrymen should misunderstand one another upon almost every point of revealed religion.—We live and feed together, —speak the same language,—possess each other's books, and yet it might be supposed that we had been educated in opposite hemispheres.

Many are the individuals among the reformed, with whom I have conversed on points of religious controversy; even some

of them were men of considerable learning ; —and yet I never met the person among them, who had a correct conception of the Catholic faith. Produce your Protestant writers,—name the heroes of their pulpit,—not one can be named who has not failed when he came to tell you the substance of our catechism. I have known men who have spent twenty and thirty years in the society of a Catholic wife, whose interior piety and good conduct had even excited their veneration ;—men who have even expressed their respect for the religion which could form such mothers, and such daughters ;—yet these very men have given me proof, that they knew not the religion of Catholics. Nay I have found, that our virtues and our worship formed a riddle to their understandings, and that they were absolutely lost in a mist of misconception and error.

How often, my Friends, have we been told by those very persons, that the religion of a Catholic teaches him to believe

that, when he has committed any sin or number of sins, all he has to do, is to go, and tell them to a priest, who has received from God, and the Church, an absolute power of forgiving them :—that as often as he may fall into the like excesses, he has only to comply with the same ceremony to get absolution; by which his offences will be immediately blotted out of the book of record in which they had been scored against him by the hand of God :—moreover that the sale of absolutions, by divine right, forms a principal revenue of the priesthood of the Roman Church, who absolutely deny salvation to all sinners over whom they have not pronounced these words; *I absolve thee from thy sins, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.*

Now, my Friends, all and every single part of this account is absolute fiction,—a mere phantom of error which, like tales of ghosts and witches, is often repeated to frighten children,—to puzzle the simple,—

and amuse the learned. Nevertheless, like other spectres which delusive art has formed, aided by the machinery of priests, absolutions, and money, it direfully alarms the unsuspecting multitude; and is found to be more successful, than any argument grounded on fact. Often have we seen the mitred minister directing the efforts of his controversial pen against this ideal doctrine, and with the arms of the acutest logic, bearing it down till laid beneath his inexhausted powers; when this undaunted conqueror triumphs in the shouts of empty victory. Often have we seen the clerical orator employing ancient legends and nursery tales to raise the phantom, and next combating it to utter destruction, with all the theological love of the two universities, while fame has proclaimed him the fit antagonist of either witchcraft or popery.*

* If persons will only attend to the moral characters of those Protestants who violently declaim against confession, they will usually be found a bad race. I could name some, who in their public speeches and writings have maintained

Therefore, my Brethren, voluntarily coming forward this day, in quality of priest of the Catholic Church, to assist my Protestant adversaries in combating this object of their just aversion and alarms, I trust that in a very few words I shall shew, that this species of superstition and false religion, never had an existence but in the heated imaginations of the most ignorant and deluded of our opponents.

My Brethren, be *wise unto sobriety*, and be not credulous unto folly. Do you suppose we believe that religion can stand with vice, and virtue be found in deception? Do you imagine us to conceive, that mere forms will avail without grace,

that those who practice auricular confession are *unfit for the duties of society, and unworthy the confidence of Government*. These very persons have subsequently been publicly convicted of notorious crimes, from which verdict they only endeavoured to escape by a train of perjuries that could scarcely be exceeded by human audacity. If it should exclusively be a man's laudable ambition, *laudar ia laudato viro*, he should also fear no censure but that of the virtuous Christian,

and that bent knees will plead before God without the sincerity of the heart? Do you suppose us to think, that justice is stayed by ceremony, and that crimes are effaced by words? that the pardon of sin can be obtained by money? *Keep thy money to thyself to perish with thee,* says the apostle, *because thou hast thought that the gift of God may be purchased with money.* (Acts viii. 20.)

Moreover, addressing myself to my own brethren, I say, if there be an individual whose mind is possessed by such ideas, let him not call himself a Catholic: the viciousness of his heart has encroached upon his reason, and determines him to admit a principle, which originating in his passions, shall find its recompense in hell. Infine, if any thing more can be wanting to lay for ever this imaginary phantom, let it be known that it is blasphemous heresy to say, that any one can absolutely forgive sins, but God, against whom they have been committed;—that it is a damnable heresy,

even to think that a priest or a bishop can absolve a sinner from the bonds of sin independently of Jesus Christ and God. No! you might as well say, that the pen can write without the hand, or that the tongue can speak without the soul. —Having, therefore, as I hope, fully exposed the nothingness of this bugbear, which has so often haunted the minds of Protestants, I shall, on the other hand, proceed to unfold the subject of this discourse, which is to establish in your minds as an introductory premise, this single proposition; that in the Church of Christ there are the means of obtaining the remission of all sin, with repentance;—reserving for another occasion the highly important duty of manifesting what these means are, and of conclusively establishing them.

It is universally held as a divine article of revelation, that baptism can never be reiterated. Its purifying grace indeed, by remitting all actual crime as well as hereditary defect, expresses perfect regenera-

tion in Christ, and restores us to that state of innocence and favour with God, from which our first parents unhappily fell. Nevertheless it secures us not against temptation, which is ever to be found in the malice of our spiritual enemies,—in the disorder of our own nature, and the profane manners of the world. In the event therefore of a Christian relapsing into sin, after baptism, is the soul, which is again become defiled with guilt and deprived of her inheritance in the celestial paradise, to be for ever lost?—or is there a way to recover forfeited grace? My Brethren, *religion*, *scripture*, and *reason*, inform us that man may even then obtain the pardon of his sins;—that however great, and however numerous, all are remissible, if he only properly apply for their remission. This proposition I ground, in the first instance, on the evidence of sacred scripture, which, in almost numberless places, holds out to us this doctrine as the promise of Jesus Christ. St. John began his mission by

proclaiming the Messiah to the Jews, *and the remission of sins* ; that Messiah, who himself declared, that he came to bring salvation to the souls of men ; *the Son of Man*, said he, *is not come to destroy but to save* : to which his beloved disciple adds, *that as many as received him, he gave them power TO BE MADE the sons of God* ; and the Baptist on their meeting exclaimed, *behold the Lamb of God who taketh away the sins of the world.* (John i. 12. 29.) And just before he took a final leave of his apostles by his ascension into heaven, he gave to them the power of forgiving sins ; *whose sins, he said, you shall forgive, they are forgiven them* : (John xx. 22.) and he declared to them that the chief object of his death and resurrection was, *that penance and the remission of sins should be preached in his name unto all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.* (Luke xxiv. 47.)

In short, if we attend to the whole tenor of the Gospel, and study the acts and epistles of the apostles, we may perceive,

that the great design of Jesus Christ, in forming the Christian religion, was to establish among mankind, a lasting evidence of his coming, and to provide for *the remission of sins*. (Luke xxiv. 47.)

Now, my Brethren, reasoning from the general and explicit manner, in which these assurances are given, I conclude, that if there be not *a remission of sins* committed after baptism, then the object of Jesus Christ has been most imperfectly effected,—his promises are vain and nugatory to the greater part of Christians,—and the sinner is still without a remedy for his disorders.

For, however great be the benefit of baptismal purification and forgiveness, yet, considering the common weakness of mankind, and their continual falls, the means of rising from sin and of recovering grace are as necessary, and essential to our condition, as the grace of original regeneration. Otherwise repentance would be a vain thing, and a second redemption

as necessary as the first.—Only take a view of men and observe how few on reaching the last term of life, can say they never forfeited their baptismal innocence. Sin, which is often but the act of a moment, is frequently followed by years of sincere regret and contrition; acts prescribed and enforced in almost every page of the sacred scripture.—Surely then it must be for some end or purpose, and for what, if not for *the remission of sin.*

Again, my Brethren, can any words convey a more universal and unlimited promise of forgiveness than these which Jesus Christ addressed to his apostles, *whose sins ye shall forgive they are forgiven them?* (John xx. 22.) Has he even restricted the ministers of his gospel in the exercise of this power, either to number or degrees of enormity? Has he particularized with an exception the sins of baptized persons, his own special members? No, my Friends, he embraces all mankind in his merciful comprehension, and declares, *as my Father sent me, so I send*

you; receive ye the Holy Ghost; whose sins ye shall forgive, they are forgiven them: simply adding also, and whose sins ye shall retain, they are retained. (John xx. 22.)

That is, exercise the discretion of a prudent judgment;—*give not pearls to swine*;—offer not mercy to the impenitent, for it will avail them not.

Moreover, did not the apostle St. Paul act upon this injunction of Jesus Christ? Did he not invite those Christians to return to grace who had gone into the ways of vice and corruption? Did he not pardon the incestuous Corinthian, and say *that he had done it in the person of Christ?* (2 Cor. ii. 10.) Surely then, I repeat, this must have been for some end and purpose, and for what, if not for the remission of sins; and as the same apostle says, *that the spirit might be saved in the day of the Lord?* (1 Cor. v. 5.) In fact, I will put it to our adversaries to say, if sin be remissible or not. If they answer in the negative, they not only deprive God of the most glori-

ous attribute of mercy,—change the forgiving *Father* into an inexorable executioner,—extinguish the divine virtue of *hope* in all those who have fallen into sin after baptism,—but place the sinner at the brink of hell, only waiting the stroke of death. In which case, we shall ever be at a loss to explain the compassionate feelings of the human heart. For if the soul be the image of the Creator, and reflect his perfections, then mercy is a distinguishing attribute of the Deity, to be exercised in the pardon of the repenting sinner. Nay if our adversaries say, that sin is irremissible after baptism, would it not be a more wise and prudent policy to reserve that religious rite to the last moment of their lives, rather than by hastening it in the early period of infancy, to expose themselves to the danger of afterwards dying in sin? Yes, the very fact and practice of infant-baptism amongst our adversaries, proves they consider sin remissible after baptism. But if sin be remissible after baptism, the

remission must be in this life; for the moment of death, is the moment of judgment:—the season of grace once elapsed, that of retribution arrives, and it is the sentence only that the soul awaits. Once passed the bound of time, the soul stands in the presence of her Creator, guilty or not guilty, and divine justice must take its course. For as the mercies of God are infinite, so also is his justice, and the one, can never supersede the other.

But the soul will then repent you say.—My Brethren, the essential difference between time and eternity is, that the one is a pause,—a suspense,—in which a change *may* come to pass; whilst the other is a state of everlasting immutability. And consequently, if the soul be guilty at the very last verge which divides temporal life from eternity, she stands condemned. True, she will certainly repent, but her repentance will follow condemnation.—Not the saving balm of compunction founded in charity, and commended by Jesus Christ,

(Luke vii. 47.) but the torture of that gnawing worm, remorse, which never dying, will feed upon her vitals, and convert her repentance into black despair.

I have now then, my Friends, advanced so far as to prove that in the Christian Church there are the means of obtaining the remission of all sins with repentance. I have established this comfortable principle on many and clear words of sacred scripture; words so distinct and forcible, that they cannot be misunderstood. I trust then that so pleasing and desirable a proposition will meet with no stern rejection from any in this assembly, and that when you behold it supported by the ancient testimony of the Apostles Creed, *I believe the remission of sins*, and the solemn evidence borne to it by the Universal Church, all will be willing to adhere to it, as a revealed article of the Christian faith. My Brethren, divine *remission of sins* is an object so interesting to man, that the very mention of it I think, should awaken every sensation of the heart, prejudice should pause in silence,—a willing

ear collect every cheering assurance,—and in the most perfect simplicity and candour, the soul should revolve the truths submitted to her.

I therefore, announce to you *the remission of sins*. I come in the name of God and Christ to publish it to the nations of the world, and it is from the theatre of Calvary, from beside the cross of Christ, that I proclaim it to every people of the earth. Here contemplate the blood of a God incarnate flowing in torrents,—view his agonies, his sufferings,—count his wounds, and confess the full satisfaction he has paid for sin to the insulted Majesty of the Eternal. It is his expiring soul breathing out these divine words, *all is consummated*, that so eloquently announces the remission of sins. Oh ! look to the cross and say, if you can, what sin is irremissible to the sinner converted to God ! *This day, said he, to the thief, thou shalt be with me in paradise.* (Luke xxiii. 43.)

On Calvarythen I take my stand, and on the merits of Christ, I ground all my

faith and hopes in *the remission of sin*; whilst repentance of heart must be the sinner's disposition to render him worthy of this grace. For it is written, *cast not pearls before swine.* (Matt. vii. 6.) Indeed whoever preaches the humiliating passion of Jesus Christ, a Man-God, necessarily preaches *the remission of sin.* For who can turn to the cross and not say, your crimes, my Brethren, and the crimes of every penitent in the world have been there discharged. Yes there is a sufficiency of satisfaction to ransom the iniquities of a hundred worlds. But still it is on the sinner's due repentance only, that it can apply. For as all crime is the moral act of the mind, or the disposition of the soul to sin, so sin can never cease, until that disposition is converted into sincere regret, and the determination of never offending more. Then admitting free-will, God may glorify his mercies by graciously applying to the soul the merits and satisfaction of his divine Son, in that mode, most agree-

able to his own will and most useful to the creature.

Now, my Friends, if I may be here allowed to throw out a hint about the mode which providence has adopted, I will simply repeat what I have stated to you in a former instruction, that in the ordinary occasions of conferring extraordinary graces, it has pleased God to institute an external ceremony to accompany, mark, and express the invisible grace which is then conveyed to the soul. * This is distinctly and strongly exemplified by the external act of baptism, a sacred ceremony performed by a minister in his name, to express and accompany the application of the merits of Jesus Christ to the soul for her general purification. But as the merits of Jesus Christ are equally necessary for the forgiveness of sin committed after baptism, so the application of these merits is also expressed and accompanied by an external sacred rite or ceremony, called *penance*, in

* See page 36.

which a duly consecrated minister is to act in the name of God,—officially to witness the repentance of the individual,—and instrumentally to discharge the delinquent. Mark the words of St. Paul, *Let a man so account of us, as of the ministers of Christ, and the dispensers of the mysteries of God.* (1 Cor. iv. 1.)

True, my Friends, it is only in the blood of Jesus Christ, that the soul can be purified from sin; but as her original regeneration to grace, in the blood of Christ, was distinguished by an outward religious rite,—so her subsequent recovery of lost grace, is also to be marked by a ceremonial religious act, equally essential as that of baptism. And as we say, the grace of regeneration is not water, but is administered with the *laver of water in the word of life*,—so the grace of reconciliation is not penance, but is administered with the sacramental form of penance. In the same manner,—as we ordinarily affirm, that he who has not submitted to the outward ceremony of baptism, has not received the

grace of regeneration, so we ordinarily say, that he who has not submitted to the ceremonial form of penance, has not received the grace of reconciliation with his offended God ; always abscinding from those extraordinary cases of moral and physical necessity, alluded to in my discourse on baptism, and which being out of the common line of life, must be left to the just but secret determinations of Providence.

Once more, then, I affirm that I come in the long train of apostolical ministers to preach *the remission of sins*. Methinks that were a single individual to rise, proclaiming such a commission from the extremities of the earth,—methinks that if such a voice were to be heard in the deserts of Africa, or on the plains of India, all nations would assemble to learn the truths he came to announce. Sure I am, that for my part I would pass the ocean, climb mountains, and traverse wilds inhabited by beasts and savages, till I accosted

that man, who uttered such words of salvation. Yet be astonished, ye heavens ! when in the name of God and Christ,—in the midst of my countrymen,—in the center of whatever is great, dignified, and learned, I proclaim to a Christian people, that *there is remission of sins*,—(and if I possessed the strength of thunder, my voice should penetrate the palaces of kings, as well as the peasant's cabin,) there is hardly one who will turn aside to listen.

Still if I were to come in the name of the god of mammon, or of this world, and announce myself empowered to confer a fortune, to bestow an estate, oh what crowds of followers would then present themselves ! whole towns and villages would come forth to meet me. They would hail me as their long desired,—they would claim me as their own,—they would almost pay me adoration ! Oh then, with the prophet I must exclaim, *Wo to thee Jerusalem*, wo to ye my countrymen. It is in this your conduct that I am forced to con-

fess the reasonableness of the torments of hell. You have just contemplated the infinite satisfaction paid for sin ; and it is not in my own name, but in the name of God that I call upon you to seek the remission of your sins in penance ;—and while whole provinces would rise up to receive me, if I offered them the gold and happiness of this world, there is not one found to accept the grace which I bring, contained in these words, *Whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven them.* (John xx. 22.) Yes, my Friends, I repeat, it is the blood of Jesus Christ flowing on Mount Calvary, that proves *the remission of sins* in this world, and it is *the remission of sins* in this world, that proves a hell in the next. Oh then again wo to ye my countrymen, who thus tempt your God, by despising his merciful provisions here, and presuming on his forgiveness hereafter. Think of his future justice, and measure it in the scale of his present insulted mercies.

But you say, we cannot believe you,—

let one rise from the dead and tell us that *his sins were forgiven* in this life. My Brethren, deceive not yourselves after this manner ; if you believe not me speaking in the name of God, on these grounds, *neither would you believe one risen from the dead.* This is no vague assertion, but the declaration of eternal truth, and has been verified in respect to millions in the resurrection of Jesus Christ. Remember the answer that was made to the rich man in the gospel. *I beseech thee, Father, said he to Abraham, that thou wouldst send Lazarus to my Father's house, for I have five brethren, that he may testify unto them, lest they also come into this place of torments. And Abraham said to him : They have Moses and the prophets, let them hear them. But he said : No, Father Abraham ; but if one went to them from the dead, they will do penance. And he said to him : If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they believe if one rise again from the dead.* (Luke xvi. 27.)

I conjure you then, my countrymen, in the name of God and religion, by the blood that has redeemed you, by that felicity to which you aspire hereafter, to turn your thoughts to this important subject. It is not with expressions of anger and reproach that I am desirous of pursuing you : I would meet you with the generosity of a brother, I would treat you with the candour of the most disinterested friendship. Whilst I behold you forgetful of the sacred ordinances of your God, and carelessly directing your course along the wide and beaten way of unmortified life, I remind you of the penitential and humiliating path which Jesus walked ; I tell you, that as his disciples and followers you are to conform to his divine example, to become mortified and humble, and that penance is the road of salvation, marked out for sinners. Still, if you refuse to hearken to my counsel, my prayer shall be, that your foolish confidence may find excuse in the sight of God, that mercy may

be its protection, and that the infinite merits of Jesus Christ may satisfy for every deficiency. I will beseech our common Father, to weigh your sins against that blood which his divine Son spilt upon the cross,—to count your transgressions with his wounds,—and to comprise you in the prayer he offered for his executioners ; *Father forgive them, for they know not what they do.*



SERMON XLIV.

ON THE SACRAMENT OF PENANCE.

Except you do penance you shall all likewise perish. (Luke xiii. 5.)

MY Brethren, when I contended in my last discourse against the silly and vain notion that *mere man* could forgive sins, when I pronounced it foul heresy to believe that any one can *absolutely* pardon crime, except the Deity himself, against whom it has been committed, you must not imagine, that because we do not hold the false and absurd sentiment just noticed, —God cannot constitute, and has not actually chosen man to be his instrument and agent in pardoning sin. That man can do nothing of himself in the line of grace, is true and certain; still God may choose and employ him to dispense his gifts, or to

spread his blessings.—HE has selected him to wash with water in baptism, whilst he himself pours into the soul his more purifying grace.—God proclaimed his law and commandments, but sent his prophets and ministers to announce them to his people.

As therefore it would have been vain in the apostles to have preached the Gospel, unless Christ himself had commanded and co-operated,—so also it would be vain for man to pardon sin, unless God should likewise absolve the sinner. Therefore, although I am willing to join with my Protestant friends, in rejecting those false opinions, which attribute to man an absolute power and authority to forgive sin independently of the Deity, yet I am ready to maintain, that as God has chosen men to be his instruments and agents in purifying his creatures from original and actual sin by the spiritual regeneration of baptism, so he has likewise commissioned and delegated men, as his instruments and agents, to pardon and restore those to grace who might afterwards

relapse. He has instituted for the latter a *form* of repentance, a tribunal of contrition and penance, in which his minister, instead of saying, *I baptize thee, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost*, uses these words, *I absolve thee, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.*

Prescinding from the necessary dispositions of faith and contrition we moreover discover this difference, that whereas the minister in baptism is the only actor, the sinner in penance also performs his part, humbly and sorrowfully accusing himself of his crimes. The first may be said to be a free and gratuitous grace of Jesus Christ, like the redemption of Calvary; but if that be forfeited by sin, the subsequent pardon and reconciliation, though gratuitous on the part of God, are to be accompanied and secured by the criminal's own humiliation and repentance. Hence in the Catholic Church it is called the sacrament of *penance*, on account of the grace or pardon

which it confers, and the penitential condition to which it subjects the penitent. Besides, in the early ages of Christianity, canonical, that is, fixed, stated and regular penances, were ordained by the Church for the different species of sin; obligations which the penitent took upon himself to discharge, and which later discipline has dispensed with, for a milder species of satisfaction, on the strength of that authority which the apostles and their successors received from Jesus Christ, when he said, *Whatsoever ye shall bind upon earth, shall be bound also in heaven, and whatsoever ye shall loose upon earth shall be loosed also in heaven.* (Matt. xviii. 18.)

Thus no individual can obtain the remission of sins after baptism without submitting to penance, either in effect or in desire. *Except you do penance, said Jesus Christ, you shall all likewise perish:* (Luke xiii. 5.) which penance comprises contrition, confession, and satisfaction. I am aware that in respect to the two last requisites for sa-

cramental penance, viz. confession and satisfaction, we are opposed by numbers who call themselves Protestants.* Many of whom even refuse to admit the text I have selected for this discourse; affirming, that instead of *except you do penance*, we should read *except ye repent*. My Brethren, since Catholics in the Latin Church have never ceased to use the old Latin version as corrected by St. Jerom, and commonly denominated the *Vulgat*, so they continue to read the passage as it there stands, and is given in my text, and has been uniformly quoted by the Latin Fathers. Whereas our Protestant friends in their determined predilection for every thing Greek, consider the original sense better conveyed by the other term *repent*. Now, my Friends, in my respect for Catholic translations, I am by no means inclined to promote a mere dispute of words with our Protestant ad-

* As Protestantism, whatever it may be in theory, is observed in practice to be a mere negative religion, its professors must necessarily be opposed to every positive article of the Catholic faith.

versaries ; my labours tend to a nobler object. These expressions, *repent* and *do penance*, to me appear very much alike, and in common conversation are often indifferently used. But for the moment even conceding to Protestants their objection in its full force, they are much deceived if hence they conclude that they have gained any thing on the question at issue. For their *repentance*, like our *penance*, is still an indeterminate expression, which must be duly defined by authority, before its sense can be properly understood. In short, repentance includes penance or some penitential act ; which of course leaves the Protestant defeated in that object which we have reason to think he had principally proposed to himself in his opposition to our translation from the Latin *Vulgate*.

In other words, as repentance, according to the Protestant, is absolutely necessary for the sinner to attain salvation, *except ye repent*, says the Protestant, *ye shall all likewise perish*,—let him say, what is the quality

and nature of this repentance :—let him determine the degree in which it will avail :—let him say if the interior moral act of the soul, is to be accompanied or unaccompanied by any outward corresponding act of repentance.—In short, as his salvation is depending, let him positively state how much repentance is necessary to appease the anger of the Almighty :—otherwise he must find himself in the awful and singularly distressing situation, of being left in ignorance of the condition so severely enjoined, and which alone is to entitle him to the forgiveness of heaven. *Except you do penance you shall all likewise perish.* (Luke xiii. 5.) For surely the absolute necessity there is of obtaining the remission of our sins in this life, and the absolute obligation we lie under, according to my text, of doing penance for them, should naturally urge us to discover what is to constitute that penance or repentance so strictly demanded of *all*.

Nothing then, my Friends, can more evidently prove the divine superiority of

the Catholic religion over every other,—nothing more plainly declare its high origin, than the circumstance of every point being therein definitely settled concerning this interesting question of salvation. While the reformer is ever insecure, the Catholic is enjoying a moral repose,—and while the repenting Protestant looks back upon his crimes with anxious trepidation, uncertain of what is demanded of him by the justice of God, the penitential Catholic retraces his past sins in the sorrow of his heart, but in humble composure of mind builds his hope of forgiveness on the solid ground of a faithful compliance with every condition that Jesus Christ and his Church have specially marked out for him ; I mean, contrition before God,—confession before his minister,—and satisfaction as imposed by the Church.

My Brethren, having proved in my last discourse, that in the Church of Christ there are the means of obtaining the remission of all sin with repentance, it

shall be my endeavour this day to shew, that Jesus Christ has instituted the sacrament of penance for the ordinary * re-

* When we say that sin is ordinarily remitted by the sacrament of penance, we mean that all sinners are under the obligation of receiving that sacrament, as the ordinary channel of forgiveness. At the same time, however, that penance is imposed as an indispensable law upon every Christian who sins mortally after baptism, still it is not to be inferred from this principle, that an act of *perfect contrition* will not also reconcile the sinner to God. It undoubtedly will at any time, however grievous his guilt. But as no act of *perfect contrition* can be formed without a real disposition to comply with every Christian duty, so the obligation of duly receiving the sacrament of penance is included and still remains on the sinner's conscience by indispensable necessity, from which he cannot be excused without mortal sin.

Contrition is distinguished by the Church, as *perfect*, and *imperfect*. Perfect contrition, (I mean that sorrow which is founded on a pure love of God—or that which grieves for sin, because it offends him who is infinitely deserving of our service) forgives sin *antecedently* to receiving the sacrament of penance; that is, it remits the sinner's guilt immediately upon his making such act of contrition.—But imperfect contrition (called attrition) or that sorrow for sin which is formed upon some less perfect motive than the pure love of God, such as, the fear of his punishments, the loss of heaven, remorse of conscience,

mission of all sin committed after baptism ; and hence that the confession of sin with

or a virtuous horror of vice, will only remit sin when actually joined with the sacrament of penance. To which sacrament moreover the person must approach with sincere sentiments of humility, piety, and fear of God ; combined with a real desire of amendment. Acts of *perfect contrition* therefore cannot be too strongly recommended to every Christian, but particularly to those who have not the opportunity of confession ; indeed they are to them of absolute necessity.* They may be made often in the day,

* As I have no other wish but that of stating the doctrine of the Church correctly, I will here strengthen this exposition, by quoting a work entitled, *A DAILY EXERCISE FOR THE DEVOUT CHRISTIAN*, which has gone through twelve editions in Ireland.

“ *Of Contrition, the first part of Penance.*—A sinner cannot duly perform this important affair of penance unless he conceives a sorrow for his past offences.”

“ This sorrow may be either perfect or imperfect.”

“ It is perfect, 1. When it proceeds from perfect charity, grounded on the consideration of God’s love and goodness. 2. Accompanied with an inward, sincere, and cordial detestation of the crime committed. And 3. Joined with a firm purpose and resolution of future amendment.”

“ It is imperfect, when charity in us is imperfect, and when our sorrow proceeds, 1. Rather from the fear of hell. 2. Or from the desire of heaven. 3. Or from the foulness of the sin itself, than from the love of God.”

contrition to a priestly minister of the Church, being a divine ordination can

but should never be omitted morning and evening. I have inserted one in the Liturgy, at page 36, which may be daily repeated; see it also quoted in this vol. p. 47.

“ The first is called contrition; the second attrition.”

“ Attrition is of itself insufficient to obtain pardon; and therefore it must be accompanied with a sacramental confession, to render it effectual for the remission of sins.”

“ Contrition is so excellent, that *St. Cyprian* esteems it the very best thing that a mortal creature can offer up to its Creator. It is so powerful, that *St. Ambrose* says, *It opens heaven, shuts up hell, cures all the soul's diseases, repairs all spiritual ruin, and serves as a sponge to efface all iniquities.* It is so pleasing to God, that he never rejects an humble and contrite heart, but ever receives it as a most perfect sacrifice. *It is so easy, that a moment may conceive and produce it: for neither the shortness of time, nor the extremity of the last hour, hinders the pardon of a contrite penitent.* Finally, it is so profitable, that it not only obtains pardon for past offences, but gains also a future crown of glory.”

“ But this motive must proceed, 1. From a motive of the love of God, and not from any servile fear; as when a child having offended his father, grieves not so much for fear of being disinherited, as for having been disobedient to so loving and so loved a parent. 2. It must be accompanied with a sincere and hearty detestation of the crime, like that of the prophet *David*, and of the apostle *St. Peter*; and not merely an outward verbal lamentation like that of *Antiochus* and *Esau*; and 3. It must be joined with a firm resolution of future amendment, and of avoiding the occasions of sin.”

never be dispensed with without a necessity:

The Council of Trent speaking of contrition, says, (Sess. 4. c. 4.) "Contrition, which holds the first place among the said acts of the penitent, is also a sorrow of mind, and a detestation of sin committed, with a resolution of not committing it any more. This feeling of contrition was always necessary, to obtain the pardon of sin; and when joined with confidence in the divine mercies and the desire of doing what is necessary for rightly receiving the sacrament of penance, also prepares the sinner who has fallen after baptism, for the remission of his sins. The holy synod therefore declares that this contrition comprises not only a cessation of sin, together with a purpose and beginning of a new life, but also a detestation of the evil committed; according to what is written, *Cast away from you all your transgressions, by which you have transgressed, and make to yourselves a new heart and a new spirit.* (Ezec. xviii.) And certainly he who shall consider the exclamations of the saints, *To thee only have I sinned, and have done evil before thee,* (Ps. l.)—*I have laboured in my groanings, every night I will wash my bed,* (Ps. vi.)—*I will recount to thee all my years in the bitterness of my soul,* (Isai. xxxviii.)—and others of this kind, will easily perceive, that they were produced by a strong detestation of the life which had been led, and through an earnest hatred of sin. The council also teaches, that although this contrition happens sometimes to be perfect by charity, and reconciles man to God, before the sacrament (of penance)

My Brethren, the great object of Jesus Christ in establishing the ministry of his

is actually received, nevertheless this reconciliation is not to be ascribed to the contrition itself, as distinct from the desire of the sacrament, which is included in the contrition. It also declares that that imperfect contrition which is called *attrition*, because usually conceived from a consideration of the hatefulness of sin, or a fear of hell and punishment,—provided it exclude the wish to sin, and be joined with the hope of pardon,—not only does not render the individual a hypocrite and more guilty, but on the contrary is a gift of God, and an impulse of the Holy Ghost, who does not indeed as yet inhabit, but so works upon the sinner, that thus assisted, he is able to prepare for himself a way to justice. And although without the sacrament of penance it cannot by itself conduct the sinner to justification, nevertheless it disposes him to obtain the grace of God in the sacrament of penance.* For urged by this salutary fear, the Ninivites did penance at the preaching of Jonas denouncing threats against them, and called upon God for mercy. Wherefore some greatly slander Catholic writers, by charging them with teaching that the sacrament of penance confers grace independently of the dispositions of the receivers—which the Church of

* Many persons have erroneously confounded this species of imperfect contrition with the mere *timor servilis*, which being a subject of scholastic contention, was left unjudged by the Council of Trent, at the instance of the Bishop of Tuderanus. See Paley's *Hist. of the Council*, Lib. 12. c. 10.

Church, was to instruct us and provide for the remission of sin. *I desire not the death*

God never taught nor believed. It is moreover false to assert, that contrition is extorted and forced, and not free and voluntary."—It may be useful here to state the reasons, which urged the council to explain itself on this subject. The reformists had attacked the received doctrine of the Church ; Luther in his second Sermon De Pœn. also in Lib. cont. Bul. Antichristi. Art. 6. and condemned by Leo 10, writes : " Contrition is formed in two ways. First, through the consideration and review and detestation of sins, by which a person, according to the expression, repasses his years, in the bitterness of his soul, by weighing the enormity of his sins,—the loss they have occasioned,—their foulness and number,—as also the forfeiture of eternal happiness, and the incurring of eternal damnation, and other reflections calculated to excite sorrow and grief, Now this contrition makes a man a hypocrite and even a greater sinner ; because he only acts thus through a fear of the commandment, and through grief on account of damnation ; and all such persons are unworthily absolved. And this is that contrition which Catholics call unmeritorious out of the sacrament ; others term it attrition, directly disposing the person for contrition ; which opinion I judge to be erroneous."—So far the arch-heretic Luther ! Against this heresy therefore the Council of Trent drew up the fifth Canon on Penance, (Sess. 14. de Pœn. Can. 5.) " If any one shall say that that contrition, which is formed through the consideration, review, and detestation of sins, by which a person repasses his years in the bitterness of his soul, by weighing the enormity of his sins, their

of the wicked, said he by his prophet, but that the wicked turn from his way and live, (Ezec. xxxiii. 11.) Baptism, which is a figure of our redemption in his blood on Mount Calvary, was never to be reiterated. At the time therefore that he empowered his apostles to confer on all men the blessing of redemption by baptism, forbidding them ever to renew that divine rite, he also, by a separate and distinct institution, lodged with them a discretionary power of absolving those from sin, who having been once regenerated, could not again claim the benefit of that grace. *As my Father sent me, said he to his apostles, so I send you. When he had said this he breathed on them, and he said to them, whose sins ye shall forgive, they are forgiven them; and whose sins ye shall retain they are retained.—For this it behoved Christ to suffer, and to*

number and foulness, the loss of eternal happiness, and the incurring of eternal damnation, with the resolution of a better life,—is not a true and useful sorrow,—nor a preparation for grace,—but that it makes a man a hypocrite and a greater sinner; infine that it is a forced sorrow, and not free and voluntary; let him be anathema,”

rise again on the third day : and that penance and remission of sins should be preached in his name unto all nations beginning at Jerusalem.—Behold I am with you all days even unto the end of the world. (John xx. 21.—Luke xxiv. 46.)

Here then is made manifest the merciful providence of Jesus : herein is declared the grand and divine commission which he gave the apostles, when he said, *As my Father sent me, so I send you.* In choosing them to be his sacred agents and co operators in rescuing man from perdition, *whose sins you shall forgive they are forgiven,* he requires of them both prudence and discernment in the execution of this commission, by adding, *and whose sins ye shall retain, they are retained.* Moreover, my Brethren, what can be more plain and evident than that if the ministers of religion be required by Jesus Christ to exercise their judgment and discretion in forgiving and retaining the sins of men, men are also required by Jesus Christ to unfold their sins to them. The one necessarily implies the

other.—For how can the understanding judge and decide on a case which has never been submitted to it. The act would be rash and inconsiderate folly.

Hence this divine institution becomes a sacred tribunal, in which the sinner is to declare his guilt and wait the decision of his spiritual judge. In reference to which, as it is understood by all the holy Fathers, Jesus Christ told his apostles, *I will give to you the keys of the kingdom of heaven ;— and whatsoever ye shall bind upon earth shall be bound also in heaven, and whatsoever ye shall loose upon earth shall be loosed also in heaven.* (Matt. xvi. 19.—xviii. 18.) I will give you a power, said he, equal to that which my Father hath given me ; you shall open and shut to sinners, the doors of mercy, and of justice, and *behold I am with you all days even to the consummation of the world.* (Matt. xxviii. 20.)

The obligation, you say, of confessing our sins is painful and humiliating, yet it is easy, you admit, to conceive that it was

enjoined by God, as a penance for the transgression; particularly as he had bound the Jews to the confession of their sins by the Mosaic law, which was evidently a figure of the sacrament of penance in the Christian Church. We read, *and the Lord spoke to Moses, saying; say to the children of Israel, when a man or woman shall have committed any of all the sins that men are wont to commit; and by negligence shall have transgressed the commandments of the Lord, and offended, they shall confess their sins, and restore the principal itself, and the fifth part over and above, and a ram shall be offered for expiation to be an atoning sacrifice.* (Num. v. 5.)

Confession, therefore, you say, appears to have been enjoined by Jesus Christ;—but that any set of men should hold the *keys of heaven*, and should have the power of opening it to the sinner by pardoning sin, is truly incredible.—My Brethren, undoubtedly God may employ his priests, as the monarch appoints his judges,

without any detriment to his own sovereign authority. It is the judge that tries, acquits and condemns—but in whose name and by whose authority? Does he act in his own name, or in the name of his master? The relation between God and his minister, in the sacrament of penance, is perfectly correspondent, so that he who rejects the minister rejects him that sent him. *He that despiseth you, said Jesus, despiseth me.* (Luke x. 16.)

The Jews also thought it blasphemous for any one to pretend to forgive sins but God, Jesus Christ, however, by a miracle convinced them of their error; saying, *why think ye evil in your hearts? whether is it easier to say, thy sins are forgiven thee, or to say, arise and walk. But that you may know that the SON OF MAN hath power on earth to forgive sins, (then said he to the man sick of the palsy) arise, take up thy bed and go into thy house. And he arose, and went into his house. And the multitude seeing it, feared and glorified God that gave*

such power to men. (Matt. ix. 4.) And in reference to this sublime privilege and function, St. Paul writing to the Corinthians says, Let a man so account of us, as of the Ministers of Christ, and the dispensers of the mysteries of God. And in his second Epistle to them he says, God hath reconciled us to himself by Christ ; and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation. For God, indeed was in Christ ; reconciling the world to himself ;—and he hath placed in us THE WORD OF RECONCILIATION. We are therefore Embassadors. (1 Cor. iv. 1.—2 Cor. v. 18.) St. James also says, confess your sins one to another, and pray for one another that you may be saved. (James xvi.) And the apostle St. John adds, if we confess our sins, God is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all iniquity. (Epist. i. 8.) In fine the Acts of the Apostles inform us, that many of them that believed came confessing and declaring their deeds. (Acts ix. 18.)

Such, my Brethren, is the scriptural au-

thority for the Sacrament of Penance; which though so hateful and humiliating to human nature, has been received by every people, that has embraced the religion of Christ. Through the course of eighteen centuries the gospel has spread over the face of the globe, and as the banners of Catholicity have been borne by its ministers to each distant kingdom, sacramental penance has been announced to all, as the ordinary remedy for sin after baptism. Flesh and blood, that is the passions of men, have never failed to declare against it;—yet truth has trampled down opposition, and religion has triumphantly established her tribunal of penance in every nation of the world. And nothing surely, can speak more powerfully for the proposition I am maintaining, or more evidently prove the Sacrament of Penance to be a divine institution of Jesus Christ, than the fact of its becoming the faith and religion of the four quarters of the globe, in spite of personal interest and feeling, and the most

violent prejudice of human nature. Could human authority so universally influence the mind? Could it so absolutely reign over the interior of man's heart, as to make him voluntarily reveal his secret sins? no,—it is only the strong impulse of a divine motive, the powerful evidence of revelation, which could subdue our natural reluctance. But, I will ask an adversary, how it could happen that both men and ministers in every country should be all at once agreed, upon this extraordinary point of doctrine? By what philosophical charm or rule is it to be explained?—how did it happen?—if not that twelve men and their disciples commissioned by Christ, passed into every nation, preaching the Sacrament of Penance, and in their creed inscribing these words, *We believe the forgiveness of sins.*

My Brethren, when the naturalist discovers a plant growing in every country of the world,—when he observes it indigenous in the hot and cold climate,—when he

sees it springing in the valley and thriving on the mountain top far from the disturbing hand of man, does he regard it as some glass-house plant, which the nurseryman has forced by art? or does he not view it as nature's own?—My Brethren, if penance has not always formed a part of the religion of Jesus Christ, let our adversaries say when and by whom it was first made essential to it. Surely it was too important an innovation to have been left unnoticed by every historian!

It has been affirmed by some, that the sacrament of penance has been introduced into the Church since the 4th century, and that until that period, confession of sin, with priestly absolution, had never been heard of. In answer I will just instance the authority of the great and learned *Origen*, who having flourished at the beginning of the 2d century of the Christian era, can bear testimony to the early faith of the Church on this subject. * “There is yet,”

* 2 Hom. in Levit.

he says, "a painful and laborious remission of sins; when the sinner washes his couch with his tears, and his tears become his bread night and day; and when he is not ashamed to expose his sin to the priest of the Lord, and to seek a remedy, according to him, who said, "I have declared I will pronounce against myself my own injustice to the Lord, and thou hast remitted the impiety of my heart." I will also add the evidence of St. Cyprian, who lived in the same age. * "Let each one, Brethren, I pray," he says, "confess his crime, whilst he who has sinned is living; whilst his confession can be received, whilst satisfaction, and the absolution of the priest, is acceptable to God."

My Brethren, from the beginning of Christianity mention has been continually made of the sacrament of penance by the holy Fathers and Councils of the Church,†

* Serm. 5. de Laps.

† "From the institution of the sacrament of penance," writes the Council of Trent, "the Catholic Church has al-

and there is not a sect in the remotest regions of the East, whether united to, or

ways understood,—that the entire confession of sins was ordained by our Lord, and by a divine command, made necessary for all who should fall into sin after baptism; because our Lord Jesus Christ being about to ascend into heaven from this earth, appointed his priests to be his own vicars, and to act as presidents and judges; to whom all those mortal sins into which the faithful might fall, were to be referred, that they might pronounce on them a sentence agreeably to the power of the keys of remission or retainment of sins; for it is evident, that the priests could never exercise a judgment, nor be able to attend to equity in the infliction of penance, were they ignorant of the cases, or had the persons only declared their sins generally, and not specifically and separately. Hence it appears, that all mortal sins, which the penitents discover after a diligent examination, are to be confessed by them; even though they be most secret and against the two last commandments of the decalogue; which are often more injurious and dangerous to the soul than those publicly known. For on venial transgressions, (into which, notwithstanding the grace of God, we may fall, and which we so frequently commit) we may be silent without fault, since we may satisfy for them by other means, though it is still right and useful, and without any danger of presumption, that they be mentioned in confession; as is demonstrated by the practice of holy persons. As mortal sins, however, even those of thought, render men the sons of wrath, and the enemies of God, it is necessary that we

separated from the Catholic Roman Church, which does not hold it as a re-

seek from God the pardon of all of them by an undisguised and humble confession. Therefore, when the faithful strive to confess all those sins which they recollect, they undoubtedly declare those which should be acknowledged to the divine mercy: whilst those who act differently, and knowingly conceal any such sins, offer nothing to the divine goodness to be remitted by the priest. For if the sick man be ashamed to make known a disease to the physician, the medicine does not cure what the physician remains ignorant of. It moreover appears, that those circumstances also are to be explained in confession, which change the species of the sin; since without them the sins themselves are neither entirely confessed by the penitents, nor fully discovered to the judges; by which it is impossible that they can correctly judge of the grievousness of the sins, and of the penance which ought to be imposed upon these penitents. It is false therefore to say, that these circumstances are an invention of trifling persons; or that it is sufficient to mention any one circumstance; to wit, that I have sinned against my brother. It is also sinful, to say, that a confession commanded to be made in this manner is impossible; or to term it, a laceration of conscience; for it is certain that nothing more is required of penitents by the Church, than that each one, after he has examined himself, and has explored all the recesses, and windings of his heart, shall confess those sins, by which he recollects to have mortally offended his Lord

vealed article of faith. It now then only remains for me to conclude this discourse

God: whilst the rest of his sins, which after a diligent examination remain forgotten, are understood to be included in the whole, by the same confession: for which we say truly with the prophet, *from my secret sins cleanse me O Lord.* The difficulty however of such confession, and the shame of discovering our sins, might indeed appear great, unless it were diminished by so many important advantages and consolations, really imparted with the absolution to all those, who worthily approach to this sacrament. In regard however to the practice of secretly confessing to one priest, although Christ has not forbidden any one, in satisfaction of his offences, publicly to confess his sins, both for his own humiliation, as well for the example of others, and for the edification of the Church he has scandalized,—nevertheless, such confession is not ordained by a divine command; nor would it be prudently prescribed by any human law, that sins, especially such as are secret, should be stated in a public confession. Wherefore, since that secret sacramental confession, which the Church has ever practised, and still practises, has been always recommended by the most holy and ancient Fathers, as well as by general and universal consent, the vain calumny of those is evidently refuted, who venture to assert that it is in opposition to the divine command, and a mere human invention, deriving its origin from the Fathers assembled in the Council of Lateran:—for the Church did not ordain, by the Council of Lateran, that the faithful should go to confession, which she consi-

by shewing, that we have also the assent of the reformed churches of England and Germany, and consequently that the Protestant who rejects this point of doctrine, is not only resisting scripture and the universal testimony of the Catholic Church, but is also in contradiction to himself, and the canonical decisions of these very churches which he calls reformed. *Out of thy own mouth I will judge thee.* (Luke xix. 22.)

Sacramental confession is thus admitted and spoken of in the 113th Canon of the great Protestant Council, held in London in the reign of James the First, and approved, ratified, and confirmed by him, and by

dered appointed and obligatory by divine law,—but that the precept of confession should be observed at least once in the year by all and every one, who had reached the years of discretion. Whence throughout the whole Church the salutary practice of confessing during the holy and most acceptable season of Lent is observed, to the great advantage of the souls of the faithful. Which custom this holy Synod highly approves and adopts as pious and worthy to be retained. (*Sess. 4. c. 5.*)

his royal authority, under the great seal of England, ordered to be every where received and observed. It says, "that if any one shall confess his secret sins privately, to a minister, for the disburdening of his conscience, and that he may get from him spiritual consolation and relief, we do not wish the minister to be any ways held by our order, (*to reveal them to our officer*) but on the contrary, we strictly forbid them to make known to any person any sin or crime so entrusted to his honour and secresy*."

Sacramental confession is also again recommended by the 19th Canon of the Protestant Council of Dublin, held in the reign of Charles the First. It says, "The minister of every parish, and in cathedral and collegiate churches some principal minister of the church, shall the afternoon before the administration of the *sacrament of communion*, give warning by

* See Wilkins's Councils, vol. iv. p. 400.

the tolling of the bell, or otherwise, to the intent, that if any have any scruple of conscience, or desire the special ministry of reconciliation, he may afford it to those that need it. And to this end the people are often to be exhorted to enter into a special examination of the state of their own souls; and that finding themselves either extreme dull, or much troubled in mind, they do resort unto God's ministers, to receive from them as well advice and counsel for the quickening of their dead hearts and the subduing of those corruptions whereunto they have been subject,—as the benefit of absolution likewise for the quieting of their consciences BY THE POWER OF *the keys which Christ hath committed to his ministers for that purpose*.*”

In the Common Prayer Book of the Church of England moreover, we find that the officiating clergyman, reads this instruction to his people before communion.

* Wilkins's Coun, vol. iv. p. 501.

And he says, "Because it is requisite that no man should come to the holy communion, but with a full trust in God's mercy, and with a quiet conscience, therefore, if there be any of you who cannot quiet his own conscience herein, but requireth further comfort or counsel; let him come to me or some other discreet and learned minister of God's word, and open his grief, that by the ministry of God's holy word, he may receive the benefit of ABSOLUTION, together with ghostly counsel and advice, to the quieting of his own conscience and avoiding all scruples and doubtfulness." And in the Common Prayer Book of Edward the Sixth, in the directions to the minister when visiting sick and dying Protestants, we read, "Here shall the sick person be moved to make a special confession of his sins, if he feel his conscience troubled with any weighty matter, after which confession the priest shall absolve him, (if he humbly and heartily desire it.) And the same form of

absolution shall be used in all private confessions, after this sort : Our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath left power to his Church to absolve all sinners who truly repent and believe in him, of his great mercy forgive thee thine offences ; and by his authority committed to me, I absolve thee from all thy sins, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.” Which I must observe is the identical form of absolution used in the Catholic Church.

Luther moreover, the great father of the reformation, acknowledged that both confession and absolution were grounded on the word of God, and therefore in his little catechism, which is universally received by his followers, he said, “ In the sight of God, we must hold ourselves guilty of our hidden sins ; but with respect to the minister, we must confess those only, which are known to us, and which we feel within our hearts.” And, as the learned Bossuet observes, the better to discover the conformity of the Luther-

ans with us in the administration of this sacrament, we should attend to the *absolution*, which Luther has described in the same place, as given by the *confessor* to the *penitent* after confession in the following terms:

“Do you not believe that my forgiveness is that of God? Yes, answers the penitent. *And I*, replies the confessor, *by the orders of Jesus Christ, forgive you your sins, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.*”

Now, my Brethren, whether is there most cause for the Catholic or the Protestant to blush with shame? For the Catholic who has uniformly viewed this sacrament as a remedy for sin ordained by Jesus Christ, or for the Protestant who has made it the theme of his bitterest reproaches, and the object of his severest censure? * —For the Catholic who has consistently and honourably held by the faith of his

* Confession however is still retained and practised by the Methodists.

Church,—or for the other, who after apostatizing from his own principles, has dared to denounce his Catholic Brethren priest-ridden, ignorant, and superstitious? * If

* There are some terms and expressions peculiarly calculated to excite a vibration in the minds of the multitude, and rouse the bad passions of men. Adepts in the science of deceit, therefore, never fail to have recourse to these, when they wish to mislead the honest but weak understandings of the vulgar. These terms, to which has been affixed an *inverse* sense, are usually good and plausible in themselves, and such as the crowd imagine can never be used but in a just cause and for a virtuous purpose. Thus within these few years the term LIBERTY has been incessantly ringing upon our ears, and the multitude who first heard its sound, really conceived that those who so frequently used the expression, intended to give them more freedom and happiness than they actually enjoyed. Whereas their intention was widely different. Instead of more *liberty*, which the joyous exclamation of the term expressed to the people, these adepts merely intended to make authority change hands—to take it from the good and give it to the bad—to raise vice and depress virtue:—and the people only discovered the trick, when the mischief was effected.

Moreover, at the commencement of the *politico philosophical* revolution of Europe, which opened in France in the year 1789, the adversaries of religion directed their attacks

Protestant bishops, or Protestant clergymen, choose to attack the sacrament of

against it, under the name of *FANATICISM*; and from that period to the present day, philosophy has never ceased to assail and lament over the horrors occasioned by *fanaticism*! *Le Phanatisme*! It should be observed then that fanaticism, as a false religion, or misdirected zeal, is directly opposite to virtue; and as it renders men extremely criminal before God, it is universally condemnable, and consequently what all good men will concur in reprobating. Now under these circumstances the arch-philosopher often thinks proper to inveigh against *fanaticism* in the presence of the multitude, who feel inclined to believe that this *moralist* must be a man of principle. As soon therefore as he has so far established his credit with the people, unobserved he conducts them across the line that separates true and false religion, and under the same name of *fanaticism*, the whole Christian worship becomes the object of his most blasphemous and insidious attacks: whilst the undiscerning crowd never discover the snare, till they find themselves *infidels* in faith and morals.

Amongst Protestants also a similar trick is incessantly played upon the multitude, by the means of the magical term *SUPERSTITION*, designed by the adepts of Protestantism to mean the whole Catholic religion. *SUPERSTITION*, inasmuch as it is a *false* and *mistaken* worship, is impious in itself, as I have shewn in Note p. 452, Vol. I. and therefore always sinful, and equally condemned by Catholics as by Protestants. But these masters in the art of duplicity,

penance, why do they not commence the assault upon the Protestant Church instead of the Catholic? Why do they not direct their insulting outcry against Luther, Melancthon, Cranmer, Queen Elizabeth, and those Protestant bishops who undertook the task of making a new religion?—instead of coming forth to assail the Catholics, whose only crime in their eyes, and before their country, is that of never having changed the religion of Christ. Yet God and mankind shall judge between us. I now leave the Catholic to glorify God in his triumph;—and the Protestant, to own

seeing how serviceable to their cause that expression must be which is capable of carrying two senses in the opinion of the vulgar crowd, (the one meaning *false worship*, the other the *ritual exercises* of the Catholic religion) continually employ it as one of their best weapons, and the unsuspecting ignorant Protestants imagine that the Catholic worship is nothing but superstition. I would have the Protestant clergy, however, to be circumspect in using the expression for the future, since the Deists, aware of its convenience, have adopted it in this country, and now use it against the established Protestant religion as well as against the Catholic. *A faithful witness will not lie: but a deceitful witness uttereth a lie.* (Prov. xiv. 6.)

his error; and conclude, by praying, that through the grace of Jesus Christ, offered in the sacrament of penance, all sinners may come to the possession of eternal happiness.



SERMON XLV.

ON THE OBJECTIONS TO SACRAMENTAL CONFESSION.

Confess your sins one to another.

(James v. 16.)

OF all the ordinary duties of the Christian religion, none is so unpleasant to man as the confession of his sins. It is a humiliation which gives more or less pain to all, but seems particularly to startle those, who have not been habituated to the practice from early youth. If then even the Catholic feel a natural repugnance to the practice, and only submits to this duty on the ground of its being a divine precept, we cannot be surprised that the Protestant and the Dissenter should manifest a repugnance still more strong and determined. No, my Brethren, such repugnance is per-

fectly reasonable,—it would be extraordinary were it otherwise.

I trust however, now that our adversaries have heard us on this subject; and have listened to the arguments of the two last discourses, that they will not suffer their prejudices any longer to hold their reason in subjection, but bear a manly testimony to the purity of our principles, and the importance of the question at issue.

If Protestants be dissatisfied with these strong proofs which I have offered for the sacrament of penance, I have no objection that they should so express themselves.—Still let them not refuse to us the credit of acting on safe grounds,—let them not say, that we are without a plausible motive and reason for our conduct. It is unbecoming the Christian and the man to raise himself by depressing another. I shall now, then, my Friends, immediately proceed to try the force of the prejudices of our adversaries, which I believe may be collected under these two heads. Sacramental Con-

fession to a priest is painful to the sinner ;—
 Sacramental Confession to a priest is dangerous to the community.

There is naturally implanted in the mind of every man, such a consciousness of the disgrace which attaches to vice, that he is always desirous to conceal his guilt, and therefore feels a strong reluctance to reveal it to another ; because in fact he is the exposor of his own dishonour. Now, my Brethren, it is in combating and overcoming this natural repugnance, that the painfulness of confession entirely consists. I do not mean to say, that this repugnance, or honourable shame can ever be extinguished in the human breast ; it is better that it should not :—but such motives may be adduced, such reasons urged, as will persuade the soul to meet the difficulty, and triumph over the opposition of her own feelings. She may be brought wisely to weigh the objection with the necessity,—her own feelings with her own interests,—and thus determine for the least of two

necessary evils; adopting the sentiments of St. Augustin, “here cut, here burn, O Lord, only spare me in eternity!”

My Brethren, I have shewn that the confession of sin in the sacrament of penance, is the divine precept of Jesus Christ, and ordinarily indispensable for the forgiveness of sin committed after baptism. Remember his words, *except you do penance, you shall all likewise perish.* (Luke xiii. 5.) If then you will carry in your thoughts the punishment of unforgiven sin, in the other life,—if you will reflect on its duration and severity, *they shall burn in unquenchable fire,* (Matt. iii. 12.) you will discover abundant motives to disregard the objections which false pride may make against the passing humiliation of confession, and readily embrace the ordinary remedy which a merciful God has provided for sin.

But, my Friends, let me first ask you if you have really settled in your own mind, whether sacramental confession is to be opposed, as a remedy too trifling, or too

severe? If you answer because it is too trifling;—beware how you commit and judge yourselves in the sight of God.—Do you complain of an excess of his mercy, or that he exacts too little? If on the other hand you say it is too severe and painful, I ask, can any thing in this world be too severe and painful to escape hell, and avoid torments that are eternal? But that sacramental confession may appear to you, in a more favourable point of view, I will here present to you the more rude and trying confessions of the martyrs, and you shall compare their lot with your own. They are confessions which millions have sealed with their blood, and which any individual among yourselves, if it pleased God, might be called upon to make: for to these divine probations we must ever live in the pious disposition of submitting.

Contemplate then your Laurences broiling on a gridiron;—behold your Policarpes burning at the stake;—view your Ignatius's devoured by savage beasts;—see

your Hippolitus's torn in pieces by wild horses ;—consider your Catharines broken on the wheel ;—see your Agnes's and your Agathas bleeding under the reeking knife ;—look on their numerous companions of both sexes tortured with red hot pincers,—cut in two with saws,—scourged with iron thongs, mangled with swords,—stuck with arrows,—drenched with boiling lead, or bathed with scalding pitch,—and now say if you still find any thing too hard and painful in the confession of sin. As the apostle writes, *They were stoned, they were cut asunder, they were tempted, they were put to death by the sword, they wandered about in sheep-skins, in goat-skins, being in want, distressed, afflicted.* (Heb. xi. 37.)

If you recoil from the little humiliation of the confessional, how would you act if racks and gibbets were brought to your own doors ;—if placed on the engine of torture, you were called upon like these champions of virtue, to choose between God, and Anti-Christ,—pain and guilt,—

death and hell? Remember that from these confessions unto blood and death, not even the most tender and innocent could find exemption;—they were not matter of choice, but of hard necessity, and like the sacramental accusation of the sinner, could be avoided by no hypocritical subterfuge except at the expense of salvation. *He that loveth father or mother more than me, said Jesus Christ, is not worthy of me; and he that loveth son or daughter more than me, is not worthy of me. And he that findeth his life, shall lose it; and he that loseth his life for me, shall find it. (Matt. x. 37.)*

But, my Brethren, admitting this remedy for sin to be painful and repugnant to human nature, is it more so than many of those medical remedies, and surgical operations, to which men are continually compelled to submit in order to recover the health of the body. Consider those external accidents and internal diseases to which every individual is exposed.—Should they become your cases, would you not cou-

rageously bring your flesh to the knife, and your limb to the amputator? or would you sacrifice your lives to delicacy and fear? *If thy right eye scandalize thee, said Jesus Christ, pluck it out, and cast it from thee. And if thy right hand scandalize thee, cut it off, and cast it from thee, for it is expedient for thee that one of thy members should perish rather than that thy whole body should go into hell. (Matt. v. 29.)* The ancient Father of the Church, Tertullian, says, "that many defer from day to day, or refuse to give an account of their deeds, feeling more concern for their shame than their salvation. Like those who, having contracted some hateful disorder, refuse to make it known to the physicians, and thus perish on account of their bashfulness."* I might here observe that this passage of

* See also other interesting quotations from the same Father in the faith of Catholics, page 300.

See also the following extract of Sermon the 7th from the works of St. James of Nisiba, similar as to style and metaphor. An introductory preamble to this note likewise,

Tertullian forms an additional refutation of our adversaries, since it is an evidence in proof of auricular confession of sin being practised in the second age of the Church. For the shame here spoken of, can never be felt by those who only acknowledge their sins to God.

will be found page 145 of this volume. This saint assisted at the general Council of Nice.

“He who has been wounded in war is not ashamed to deliver himself into the hands of a skilful surgeon, because he was wounded through the heat of the conflict in which he was engaged. And when he is cured, the king does not despise him, but places him among the disabled soldiers of his army. So a man, wounded by the devil, ought not to be ashamed of confessing his sins, and of flying from him, and of seeking the remedy of penance. He who is ashamed of exposing his wounds to the surgeon, becomes wholly infected, by the putrescent cankered state of the wounds. But the wounds of him, who is not ashamed, are healed, and he returns to the war. On the other hand, he that has contracted a mortal distemper, expects not to be cured, nor does he again resume those arms he had laid aside. He that is overcome in our contest, may hope for safety, by exclaiming, *I have sinned*, and seeking penance. But he that is ashamed, cannot be cured, because he will not shew his wounds to the surgeon, who has received two

My Friends, I have hitherto been reasoning with you on the subject of confes-

talents, and with them cures all that are wounded. And you, who are the disciples of our physician, and to whom the power of curing has been given, ought to be careful, lest you prove an impediment to the cure of those, who are in want of medicine. But be ready to apply the remedy of penance to him, that shall expose to you his wounds. And if any should fear to make you acquainted with his misfortune, persuade him not to hide it. And when he has made it known to you, do not publish it, lest through his account, those who are not defective, be considered faulty and defective by our enemies who hate us. The band in which numbers have been wounded, is more despised by the enemy than any other. And when those who are sound discover some wounded amongst them, they take care of their wounds, and do not speak of them to their enemies. And were they to act otherwise they would be considered infamous among all their comrades. The king, likewise, who is general of the army, is angry with those who bring disgrace upon his troops, and punishes them most severely, dealing more hardly with them, than with those who have been wounded in war. If, however, the wounded will not make their wounds known, the surgeons cannot be punished because they have not cured them. Nevertheless, they will not succeed in concealing under their arms the wounds they have received, and in hiding their pains, because their bodies have contracted a deadly malady. For labouring under a consuming and mortal disorder, should they venture

sion, as if it really involved something unnatural and terrible. I have brought for-

to put on their armour, as soon as they shall begin to fight, their arms growing hot upon their limbs, will occasion their wounds to open again, and they will perish. Then on the bodies being discovered of those who have concealed their wounds, it will be made known and published, to their own disgrace and shame, that they had concealed the sufferings of their wounds; and being considered base, obstinate and mad, they shall be regarded unworthy of burial. Now he that has declared his wounds, and has been cured, must take care that he is not again wounded in the same place. For the cure of that part, which has been wounded a second time, is difficult for the wise physician; because the wounds of scars are not easily healed.--Hear, O ye (who have the keys of the gates of heaven, and unlock the door to penitents) and attend to what the blessed apostle has said. *If a man be overtaken in any fault, you, who are spiritual, instruct such a one in the spirit of meekness.* (Gal. vi. 1.) Take care, moreover, lest any of you fall into temptation.—But to you, penitents, I again repeat, do not reject the remedy which is offered you to salvation: for the Scriptures thus declare, that God will have mercy on those who confess their sins and abstain from them.—The time approaches, when grace shall cease and truth will reign. There will be no penance then, because at that time, grace will give place to his decrees. And when the hour of judgment shall arrive, he will pay no regard to the repenting;

ward the discussion with so much frightful apparatus,—and have so combined it with whatever is most horrid and painful to human nature, that it may possibly appear to you under a more terrific form than it ever did to any penitent in this world. I will now then throw aside that stern and severe aspect which has hitherto characterized me in treating this subject, and familiarly ask you in what can the great hardship of confession consist? When the sinner voluntarily comes forward to make a secret and confidential confession of his sins to the minister of religion, does he not merely tell him that he is like to the rest of his species, like to another man—like to the Confessor himself? Can he give him an account of any crime, with which the

for the term of penance is over, and complete, and there is no longer place for it. Read, most dearly beloved, learn, acknowledge and perceive, for in some manner we all need in this matter. Many indeed run in the race, but the strong and valiant man only gains the prize; every man, however, shall receive a reward according to his labours.”—

other is not already acquainted, if he is acquainted with human life? Might not the minister point to the long catalogue of human vices, and say, "There is not one among these into which your corrupted nature would not have drawn you, had you not been withheld by divine grace and assistance.—Adultery, fornication, revenge, murder, injustice, intemperance, are the natural vices of your depraved humanity, and constitute the lives of those people and nations less favoured than yourselves by grace and instruction. If *you* have not given into each and every one of these vices, in all their variations of guilt, it should rather be the subject of gratitude and wonder:—for every rivulet may be expected to take its course down its own channel,—every tree to fall as it leans,—every animal to seek the indulgence of its own propensities,—and if there be one vice to which you have not yielded, remember it is only because you have been saved by the strong arm of divine grace. Take not

then glory to thyself, but in these circumstances give honour to the Almighty. *From the heart, said Jesus Christ, come forth evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false testimonies, blasphemies.* (Matt. xv. 19.) Such might be the language of any confessor to his penitent. I therefore ask, can the sinner find it hard to confess, that he is not different from other men?—that he feels within him all the viciousness of corrupted nature, and has often yielded to it?—or does his vanity lead him to conceive that any one regards him as an angel, or a human being without the passions of a man?—Let him not then hesitate to humble himself before the minister of God, and faithfully recount his crimes for the sake of pardon. *Whose sins, said Jesus Christ, you forgive, they are forgiven them.* (John xx. 23.)

My Brethren, to prove to you that there is no real ground for that alarm and repugnance which Protestants and others manifest at the very mention of confession, for

the benefit of my Protestant hearers, whose anxious fears on this article often mislead the judgment, I will relate an anecdote of an individual now no longer living within the sphere of this world.

A person who had been educated in the principles of a Protestant, became extremely eager to embrace the Catholic religion. She accordingly addressed herself to a Catholic priest, stating the strong impulse and desire of her soul to be admitted a member of that Church, which she believed to be the only true Church of Christ: at the same time, however, observing, that she had conceived an insuperable objection to confession. The Clergyman received her kindly, and endeavoured to quiet her mind with regard to confession, by telling her, that she must have been mistaken in regard to the difficulty;—that what was practised by so many thousands and millions without any coercion, could not be in itself so unpleasant and painful as she had imagined;—that the species and number of each sin,

together with any circumstance changing its nature, is what the Church, by the Council of Trent, has judged absolutely necessary to be mentioned,*—and that all is locked up in the breast of one man, never to be divulged.—Still her objection remained unshaken;—she loved, she admired the Catholic religion,—but she hated confession!—The clergyman advised her to recommend the affair to God, and to return another day. She did so, but yet unchanged.—She returned a third and a fourth time, and in the conflict and anguish of a most tortured mind, she declared she must be for ever lost, she could never prevail upon herself to make a confession. At length reduced to a sick couch, as she was one day discoursing on the subject, the clergyman asked her, if it was any particu-

* *To the pastors*, “all those mortal sins are to be referred, into which the faithful may fall”—“it moreover appears that those circumstances also are to be explained in confession, which change the species of the sin.”—*Sess. 4. c. 5.*

lar crime, or her general conduct that made her so averse to confession.—On which she began a simple account of her life, candidly replying to the few interrogatories put to her as she continued. On her concluding, Now ! said the clergyman, what was your great objection to confession ? You have already finished before you were aware that you had commenced the task.—What ! is this all, she exclaimed with astonishment ?—is this confession ? Yes, he replied, this is all,—this is confession.—Have I then confessed, said she, all the sins of a long and wicked life ? Yes, he answered, unless your conscience reproaches you with any thing not contained in what you have already mentioned. Oh heavens ! then, she cried out, I have often told as much to my companions, who were not bound like yourself to secrecy.—I have voluntarily given an account of my life to several, whereas religion only calls for it in the presence of one ; and of one who will not betray my confi-

dence ! * God only knows how joy returns upon my soul, how I feel relieved

* It is impossible not to be astonished at the ever inviolable faith observed by the priesthood of the Catholic Church on the article of confession. Neither persuasion, interest, nor the fear of death, are sufficient to induce them to reveal what has been entrusted to their confidence *sacramentally*, or under the seal of the sacrament. Indeed, such is the universal inviolability of confession, that it may be considered almost miraculous, and not to be accounted for otherwise than by referring it to a particular interposition of Providence. The moral world presents nothing similar. Yes, if there is one thing in this mystery more wonderful than another, it is the watch which Providence himself seems to keep over the inviolability of its secrecy, which appears to be as absolute a miracle in morals, as the perpetuated existence of the Jews is a miracle in civil society :—that is, both are contrary to the general course and nature of things, and can only be accounted for by a special interposition of Providence. “There is one thing,” says a writer, “infinitely surprising, and which may be regarded as supernatural and miraculous ; I mean the secret of confession, entrusted every day to so many thousands of priests, often unfortunately little worthy of their state, and though guilty of every other fault, still faithful in what this duty requires. Ecclesiastical history scarcely furnishes an instance of infidelity in this point. In attending to it, if persons for a moment reflect on human inconstancy, on the curiosity of some individuals, and the loquacity of others ;—on the

from a burthen that was nearly pressing me to the ground. The clergyman then imparted to her sacramentally the divine absolution, after exciting her to a thorough contrition for her sins, and a firm purpose of never committing them again. My Brethren, it is almost daily that we might confirm this account by the example of persons who retire from the confessional, astonished at their ill-founded apprehensions, and rejoicing in the consolations it affords.* It now then only remains

nature and importance of the matters entrusted to the ministers of the sacrament, the revealing of which would often occasion wonderful consequences ;—if they also reflect on the motives that different interests, avarice, jealousy, and the other passions might urge, to induce them to betray their trust, we cannot doubt that the Almighty watches over his own institution.”

* Surely the circumstance of possessing one trusty friend, to whom the Christian may, by right, at all times unbosom his conscience, for the purpose of asking counsel, is an advantage, of which, those only can be properly sensible who feel the want of it. I have heard many Protestants acknowledge this advantage, which the Catholics enjoy; and every advantage is worthy of some sacrifice.

for me to reply to the second objection of our adversaries, that sacramental confession to a priest, is dangerous to the community.

My Friends, if there be any solidity in the objection before us, it must either be, that the facility of priestly forgiveness is an inducement to the commission of sin, or that the priest may employ the influence of the confessional to effect some criminal purpose.—In answer to the first, I beg leave to ask, if you would recommend the suppression of mercy, because mercy is sometimes abused? Would you desire that Jesus Christ should have preached the irremissibility of sin, that you might have been more deterred from consenting to it? Would you adopt the severe rule in your

But whilst human nature is so reluctant to acknowledge itself guilty of its secret sins, it is wonderful how ready individuals are to declare the sins of others. When we reflect on the too common topics of conversation in society,—we may naturally feel surprise that persons should make any difficulty of speaking of sins in confession.

own family of never pardoning the fault of your eldest child, that your younger offspring may have before them the terrible example of your unforgiving temper?—Will you agree to decide by this maxim in your own regard? Never appear again for instance in society, since you have there once degraded yourself.—Never again exhilarate yourself with your friends, since you once transgressed the bounds of temperance.—You may perceive then that the principle of the objection can never stand: it is foolish, light, and airy; liable to be upset by the slightest breath. We may lament the abuse of the sacrament of penance as a remedy for sin, as we regret abuses in other institutions; still there would be much greater cause for lamentation if the institution did not exist.

But, my Friends, when you say, that the facility of priestly forgiveness induces the commission of sin, are you not confounding a mere verbal and apparent forgiveness with one real and essential? Does not

the sinner know that the dispositions of the heart are severely judged by God, before he ratifies the sentence of his minister? Therefore, though he may easily promise himself the verbal absolution of a priest, can he look with equal confidence and expectation to the divine forgiveness of Jesus Christ? — *It is not every one*, said he, *that saith to me, Lord, Lord, that shall enter into the kingdom of God, but only he who does the will of my Father.** (Matt. vii. 21.)

* Many persons through the want of a right judgment, or the direction of an intelligent confessor, run into an extreme of rigorism and anxiety in preparing for the sacraments, that proves a real obstacle to their advancement in spirituality. I have known individuals of very regular life, who, for several days before they approached to confession and communion, were in the habit of shutting themselves up in their chambers for three or four hours several days successively, occupied in reading long examinations of conscience, instructions for the sacraments, &c. — till having disgusted themselves with the labour of preparation, it became their real wish that the period might be distant before they should be expected to pass again through the same course of penance. I must here declare that I am far from intending to object to mortification in any of its forms; penance and the high road of the cross

My Friends, I will give you leave to examine this or any other Catholic congregation, and you shall not discover an individual, who will not tell you, that real absolution from sin must be preceded by a change of life and conversion of heart ;— and if it ever be even sought or desired on any other terms, the sinner only adds sacrilege to his former crimes, and becomes the dupe of his own hypocrisy. This is the charity or love of God spoken of by St. Paul, when he condemns all faith without it. *If I should have all faith,* said he,

are prescribed by Jesus Christ to his followers :—but I loudly protest against the sentiment, that the Church requires such a preparation as that which I have stated, for approaching to her sacraments. And I will leave it to others to say, how frequently it must deter persons, but particularly youth, from receiving these mysteries. Neither will I attempt to lay down a universal rule of preparation for the sacraments, though a good and regular life should undoubtedly contribute to render a long preparation unnecessary ; and as repentance is not to be estimated by *time*, a few quarters of preparation may, in numerous circumstances, be preferable to many hours.

so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing. (1 Cor. xiii. 2.)

But, my Brethren, permit me to retort upon my adversary ; if it be easy to obtain the forgiveness of sin according to the faith and practice of the Catholic Church, is it not still more easy according to the faith and practice of the Protestant religion ? The Catholic is required, in addition to the sorrow and compunction of his heart, to humble himself by the confession of his sins, and to make satisfaction for them by penance, and acts of unfeigned contrition;—acts of religion which are known and evident.—But what does the Protestant ? Where are his deeds of penance ? has he not proclaimed that we may do without them ? Does he not say that only faith is necessary ? Oh ! it is truly absurd, that without any of the works of penance, the Protestant should accuse the Catholic Church of being too easy in her practice and notions of her forgiveness of sins. It is looking for a mote indeed in their neigh-

bour's eye, without perceiving the beam in their own. (*Luke vi. 41.*)

As to the objection, in its second sense, or as it supposes an influence dangerous to the community, I answer that it is wholly without foundation. For in as much as it can regard a virtuous clergyman, it is surely an improbable, not to say, an impossible case :—and if it refers to an individual of bad, or suspected character, that very character will strip him of the influence you fear. Will the impious man go to confession that he may be encouraged to sin? Will he solicit and confide in the approbation of a priest of bad fame? Will he not say within himself, “though this man applaud, I am condemned by all those whom my conscience reveres.”—My Brethren, the laws of justice and of truth, are written in every man's heart; it is not the *dixit* of a priest that can reverse them.—Even the attempt, whether by word or example, would only leave the individual an object of extreme degradation and scorn in

the opinions of the very profligate: while on the other hand, were a virtuous Christian thus exhorted to a criminal action, duty would forbid its concealment, and ecclesiastical censures must immediately follow detection.

But, my Friends, whilst you are in search of objections, drawn from the abuse of this sacrament, think of the advantages it presents to society. Reflect on the powerful influence which a virtuous and respectable clergyman is able to exert, by the means of confession, in checking and preventing vice. Recollect the numbers he brings back to the discharge of their public and domestic duties.—Consider the broils and quarrels he allays in families by preaching forbearance and forgiveness;—how frequently he rescues from misery and disgrace husbands, wives and children, by inducing them to withdraw from some dangerous connexion.—Observe the numbers brought by him to make restitution of property unjustly possessed, and to desist

from dishonest pursuits:—even the most clamorous opposers of our religion in Church and State, as I can speak from experience, have at times reaped some of these advantages of confession in the reformed conduct of their Catholic domestics.—Observe moreover how the swearer and the drunkard are checked and admonished to amend for the sake of themselves and their families,—even the public peculator and the deserting soldier will receive that advice which should make them faithful to their king and country.—Infine, my Brethren, there is no duty of public or private life which the virtuous confessor does not incessantly preach and recommend with a labour and assiduity deserving the admiration of our adversaries. Protestants often praise the public eloquence of Catholic preachers;—but they know little of those fatiguing instructions, with which long hours and days are frequently occupied in preaching to sinners in our confessionals: exhortations which have not the celebrity of the pulpit, but

are usually more impressive and effectual.

In short, my Brethren, instead of supposing that confession to a priest is an incentive to sin, you will find, generally speaking, that it is only the virtuous who make use of confession. Small indeed is the number of the profligate Catholics, who are seen to frequent the tribunal of penance. Where you behold a disedifying member of our Church, the safe presumption is, that he never goes to confession. "If the priests," writes the celebrated La Harpe on the French Revolutionists, "preached submission from the pulpit, and rebellion in the confessional, they would be hypocrites, but hypocrites never devote themselves for their faith. Amongst all those who have attempted or who wish to subvert the government, — amongst all those who raised a poignard against the constituted authorities, it would be impossible to instance one, that went to *confession*."

I will now conclude this discourse with one more observation; the necessity of the

sacrament of penance is evident from the conduct of Protestants. * How many of their communion, die confessing their sins, not in the consoling and pious manner of

* Whilst intoxicated with pleasure and in the meridian of age, and ere the clouds of adversity have spread around him, the worldly man conceives that he has *no need* of religion; and aided by a vigorous constitution, in this sentiment he may possibly pass the spring and summer of life, till his horizon lowers, and he enters the wane of mortality. Then he will begin to discover, that man is not so independent a being as he conceived,—that if happiness is to chequer the remainder of his days, he must seek it in other sources than sensual enjoyments, for which the failing powers of nature disqualify him, and that whilst the body gradually decays, his mind will need a particular support and consolation, which the exercises of religion only can supply. Even from his height of worldly pleasure and ambition, to which he is raised on the wings of dissipation, in his thoughtful moments he will discover the necessity of religion to assist him to descend the vale of life, and render his declining years happy, honourable and respected. He will perceive that religion only can fill up that vacancy within him, which the absence of pleasure or a reluctant retreat from public business must cause, and that he is left with no alternative but to choose between the characters of a neglected, disappointed, broken-down *debauchee*, and that of a virtuous, honoured and *reformed man*.

Catholics, but in a paroxism of raging despair ! How many consciences remain

It is at the turn of life, therefore, the value of religion begins to be discovered by the voluptuous worldling ; and those characters who have never really professed it up to that period, then feel themselves peculiarly wretched and abandoned without it. Behind them they see traces of that path of pleasure which they have hitherto trodden ; before them, they only observe a vale of bitterness and vexation, into which they must reluctantly enter. Now it is in descending this valley of human life, which is to terminate in eternity, that the virtuous Catholic feels so rich in the comforts and consolations, which the exercises of his religion afford. As he advances his prospect brightens.—Whilst he resigns the delusive pleasures of the world, he is requited by the gratifying sensations of a good conscience ;—in abandoning a life of profligacy, he is rewarded with the tranquillity of virtuous penance.—He withdraws from the slavish service of the world, and he becomes a faithful servant of Jesus Christ—he turns his back upon sinful pleasure, and he has the kingdom of heaven before him.

In old age, and the decline of life, the mind, like the body, is in need of support, and this circumstance alone forms to man a most seasonable *memento* of his absolute dependence on Providence. It is at that period that the mind usually wanders in quest of new resources, (she will often seek them in gambling, in drinking, in amassing wealth, &c.) where then can she so naturally expect to meet them, as in labouring for the last and great concern of life, by a faithful compliance with the duties of religion ?

tortured for years with a remorse, that no charities, no good works can appease?

And although religion is a pure tribute of the soul—and an act of the mind, nevertheless the debilitated powers of man will derive a most sensible relief and comfort, from the external exercises of piety; and whether it be the humble confession of sin, the hearing of mass, visiting the holy sacrament, repeating of *beads*, or any other act of devotion, *reflecting* age will acknowledge how powerfully conducive they are to give satisfaction and tranquillity to the human mind. Is then the short-lived boisterous season of youth alone privileged to say what promotes the happiness of man? Are furrowed brows and venerable locks entitled to no consideration in the judgments of mankind? Are the sick, the destitute and the afflicted to be deprived of what forms their only consolation, because the gay, the profligate, and the young, dissipate themselves with pleasure? In the physical world all things change—and to suppose that what has amused at the commencement, will continue to amuse in the decline of life, is to assume a most erroneous principle, and confound extremes. The object of religion, therefore, is to provide for the future, and to temper the effervescence of youth with the wisdom of age. For *what will it avail a man to gain the whole world, if he come at last to lose his soul.*

Often, then, I have expressed a silent pity at those Protestants, who in the strength of their prejudices,—and in the invincibility of their pride, have turned their backs upon an institution, ordained by the humble Saviour for

Will they explain why murderers and other criminals have frequently made a voluntary

the healing of a wounded conscience. With the exception of those moments, when noisy society helps to distract the mind from attention to herself, these individuals had to bear all the pangs of interior wretchedness, while sour irritability and vexation of spirit daily obtained over their reason that ascendancy, which made the nearest relatives live in perpetual horror of the consequences to be dreaded. Beloved children concealed the anguish of their aching hearts, whilst conjugal fidelity betrayed its consternation by anxiously watching every step. In the meantime, for the terror of friends, daily report brought the account of some individuals who had put an end to their existence under the circumstances of similar depression. The persons then by change of scene, by travelling,—by visiting the metropolis, or some watering place, endeavoured to tranquillize their minds. But they universally failed, because they mistook the cause—no cure was effected, because the malady was misconceived. The friends persuaded them that the disorder was in the brain,—in the understanding:—whereas it was entirely seated in those other affections of the soul called the *heart*—or that *reflecting* power of the mind, *conscience*. Were these individuals asked for their opinion of any affair or transaction in life, they would give it with a promptitude and steadiness that shewed the soundness of their *understandings*. But were they only invited to be cheerful—to participate of the amusements of others, the

confession of their guilt, surrendering themselves to justice? Will they say, why

self-dissatisfaction expressed by conscience so far imbittered every enjoyment, as to convert pleasure into torment. They were like *sweets* to the jaundiced palate.

Are then these sensations of the soul to be universally ascribed to enormity of criminality and guilt? No; many of the individuals to whom I allude, have been men to whom immorality could not be imputed; at least habitual immorality. That is, they had what may be termed *negative* virtue; but of *positive* virtue they had none—conscience had not the satisfaction of dwelling upon this quality. She had therefore nothing to balance against moral failings and defects; no interior consolations to place against the cares, the anxieties and the disappointments of life. Wretchedness in this manner became the predominant feeling of these persons, and they communicated it to the rest of their families. How many thousands of my countrymen are actually in the circumstances I have related!

I shall be asked, if I think that a conversation with a priest would be sufficient to dissipate these horrors? Certainly not. Could then the *confession of sin*, and the other exercises of religion in the Catholic Church, be equal to effect this wonderful change? Most UNDOUBTEDLY. Or was it only an idle expression of our blessed Saviour, saying, *Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you?* (John xiv. 27.) It might as well be denied that food gives contentment to the stomach, as to say that religion brings no

all Protestants betray so much uneasiness at the hour of death, in comparison to Ca-

peace to the soul. Whence have so many cloistered persons derived that peace of mind, to which they had been strangers in the world, except from religion? Whence did they draw the means of perpetuating for years that serenity of soul, which alone enabled them to endure the labours and privations of conventual life, except from religion? How have the martyrs and confessors exulted in their afflictions—how have priests and *charity-sisters* * consigned their lives in the painful offices of their state, otherwise than by the strength of the consolations derived from religion? How are the poorest and most afflicted, happier often in their distress, than those surrounded by riches and friends,—except through the peace of mind secured by religion? Why are Catholics universally more gay and cheerful than Protestants? Why are they so composed on their death-beds, but through the religion they profess?

Are all Protestants then to seek their peace of mind from a Catholic priest? No; but they must seek it in the Catholic religion, for they will not find it elsewhere. They must take their choice of continuing as they are, victims of wretchedness, or of *seeking* it where it shall be *found*, and of *knocking* where the door shall be *opened to them*. (Matt. vii. 7.) Many I have had the happiness of assisting in this manner to recover gladness of heart and contentment of mind, and in no instance have I known it sought in vain.

* An Order of Nuns.

tholics? Are they aware that these acts plead the want of that consolation, which sacramental confession affords? Nay more, are they aware, that to this cause, they are to ascribe those innumerable SUICIDES, which have marked the character of our Protestant countrymen since the reformation, and have disgraced them before the other nations of the world? Are they aware, that to this, they are to attribute by far the greater number of those cases of extreme melancholy and despondency which daily come within our notice, and so commonly end in those horrible accounts which the Gazettes furnish of self-destruction?

The incessant recurrence of these attempts, far more numerous than you suspect, has served to diminish the horror they used to inspire; and men wish to excuse them as acts of insanity? Undoubtedly an act of this description, can scarcely be committed without the individual being violently agitated in body and

mind ;—but does not this rather prove the person to be in his senses, than insane? The fact is, you have reduced the sinner, disturbed by remorse, to a state of despair ;—you have thrown away the plank that remained for him after shipwreck.

But you say, he should hope for salvation and forgiveness through the merits of Jesus Christ :—true, and this sacrament would be the pledge of that hope, which you have taken from him without giving him another. Unable therefore to endure his situation, amidst the continued reproaches of guilt, and the throbs of conscience, wearied of life, he plunges forth into eternity. Now, my Friends, it is in the circumstances of this truly deplorable and afflicted state of mind that the sacrament of penance proves the most assuaging consolation to the sinner. Like the haven that receives the sea-beaten mariner from the storm whilst the tempest rages round him, it restores the penitent to the calm of sweet tranquillity. My

*Keating, Brown & Co. Printers, 38, Dukes-Road,
Glasgow, London.*

Brethren, that you may never forget the promises and assurances contained in these words of Jesus Christ to his ministers, *Whose sins ye forgive, they are forgiven them*, is the particular blessing I at present wish you.

END OF VOL. III.



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Rare
Book.
Room



